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LENIN

COLLECTED WORKS

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V. I. LENIN

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PREFACE

Volume 26 contains the works V. I. Lenin wrote between September 1917 and February 1918. A large part of them deals with the Bolshevik Party's preparation of the armed uprising in October 1917. They include "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power", "Marxism and Insurrection", "The Crisis Has Matured", "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?", "Advice of an Onlooker", directives to the Central Committee and the Petrograd and Moscow Party Committees, which Lenin wrote while in hiding. In them he elaborates on Marx's ideas of insurrection as an art and sets out a concrete plan for the uprising.

A considerable part of the volume consists of reports and speeches at congresses of Soviets, meetings of Party and local government workers, appeals and messages to the people, which show Lenin as the leader of the Party and the working masses, the organiser and head of the Soviet state in its first months.

The volume also contains the drafts of the first decrees and the decrees issued by the Soviet Government which were written by Lenin and signed by him in his capacity of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, namely, the Decree on Peace, the Decree on Land, the Draft Regulations on Workers' Control, the Draft Decree on the Right of Recall, the Draft Decree on the Nationalisation of the Banks and on Measures Necessary for Its Implementation, Draft Decree on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, etc.

Lenin's struggle against the provocative and treacherous policy of the Trotskyites and "Left-wing Communists" over

the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk is reflected in his "Outline Programme for Peace Negotiations", "On the History of the Question of the Unfortunate Peace", and speeches at meetings of the C.C., R.S.D.L.P.(B.) in January and February 1918, and other documents.

Several of the works deal with the convocation and dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. They are Theses on the Constituent Assembly, Declaration of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) Group at the Constituent Assembly Meeting, January 5 (18), 1918, "People from Another World", etc.

The volume also includes "Fear of the Collapse of the Old and the Fight for the New", "How to Organise Competition?", "Draft Decree on Consumers' Communes", which give an analysis of various aspects of socialist construction and substantiate the need for a full-scale socialist competition campaign. These works lay accent on the strictest accounting and control in the economy, as the main task.

Fourteen items in this volume are included in the *Collected Works* for the first time. They are: "Draft Resolution on Freedom of the Press", "Statement to the Bolshevik Group at the Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies", "The Tasks of the Public Library in Petrograd", "Outline Programme for Peace Negotiations", "On the Opening of the Constituent Assembly", "Draft Resolution on the Provisional Bureau of the Bolshevik Group in the Constituent Assembly", "Direct-Line Conversation with L. D. Trotsky, Chairman of the Soviet Peace Delegation at Brest-Litovsk", "Instructions to the Red Guard H. Q.", "Draft Decree on the Nationalisation of Merchant Marine and Inland Water Transport", "Wireless Message Addressed to All. Special to the Peace Delegation in Brest-Litovsk", "Wireless Message Addressed to All", "Trotsky. Russian Peace Delegation. Brest-Litovsk", "Direct-Line Conversation with the Moscow Soviet". All these were written after the October Revolution and are a reflection of the Bolshevik Party's efforts to consolidate Soviet power and secure a just and democratic peace.

THE BOLSHEVIKS MUST ASSUME POWER[1]

A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE PETROGRAD AND MOSCOW COMMITTEES OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.)

The Bolsheviks, having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals, can and *must* take state power into their own hands.

They can because the active majority of revolutionary elements in the two chief cities is large enough to carry the people with it, to overcome the opponent's resistance, to smash him, and to gain and retain power. For the Bolsheviks, by immediately proposing a democratic peace, by immediately giving the land to the peasants and by re-establishing the democratic institutions and liberties which have been mangled and shattered by Kerensky, will form a government which *nobody* will be able to overthrow.

The majority of the people are *on our side*. This was proved by the long and painful course of events from May 6 to August 31 and to September 12.[2] The majority gained in the Soviets of the metropolitan cities *resulted* from the people coming over *to our side*. The wavering of the Socialist-Revolutionaries[3] and Mensheviks and the increase in the number of internationalists within their ranks prove the same thing.

The Democratic Conference[4] represents *not* a majority of the revolutionary people, but *only the compromising upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie*. We must not be deceived by the election figures; elections prove nothing. Compare the elections to the city councils of Petrograd and Moscow with the elections to the Soviets. Compare the elections in Moscow with the Moscow strike of August 12. Those are objective facts regarding that majority of revolutionary elements that are leading the people.

The Democratic Conference is deceiving the peasants; it is giving them neither peace nor land.

A Bolshevik government *alone* will satisfy the demands of the peasants.

* * *

Why must the Bolsheviks assume power *at this very moment*?

Because the impending surrender of Petrograd will make our chances a hundred times less favourable.

And it is *not in our power* to prevent the surrender of Petrograd while the army is headed by Kerensky and Co.

Nor can we "wait" for the Constituent Assembly, for by surrendering Petrograd Kerensky and Co. *can* always frustrate its convocation. Our Party alone, on taking power, can secure the Constituent Assembly's convocation; it will then accuse the other parties of procrastination and will be able to substantiate its accusations.[5]

A separate peace between the British and German imperialists must and can be prevented, but only by quick action.

The people are tired of the waverings of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. It is only our victory in the metropolitan cities that will carry the peasants with us.

* * *

We are concerned now not with the "day", or "moment" of insurrection in the narrow sense of the word. That will be only decided by the common voice of those who are in contact with the workers and soldiers, with the masses.

The point is that now, at the Democratic Conference, our Party has virtually its own congress, and this congress (whether it wishes to or not) must decide the fate of the revolution.

The point is to make the task clear to the Party. The present task must be an armed uprising in Petrograd and Moscow (with its region), the seizing of power and the overthrow of the government . We must consider how to agitate for this without expressly saying as much in the press.

We must remember and weigh Marx's words about insurrection, "*Insurrection is an art*",[6] etc.

* * *

It would be naïve to wait for a "formal" majority for the Bolsheviks. No revolution ever waits for *that*. Kerensky and Co. are not waiting either, and are preparing to surrender Petrograd. It is the wretched waverings of the Democratic Conference that are bound to exhaust the patience of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow! History will not forgive us if we do not assume power now.

There is no apparatus? There is an apparatus—the Soviets and the democratic organisations. The international situation *right* now, on *the eve* of the conclusion of a separate peace between the British and the Germans, is *in our favour*. To propose peace to the nations right now means *to win*.

By taking power both in Moscow and in Petrograd *at once* (it doesn't matter which comes first, Moscow may possibly begin), we shall win *absolutely and unquestionably*.

N. Lenin

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MARXISM AND INSURRECTION

A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.)

One of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism resorted to by the dominant "socialist" parties is the opportunist lie that preparation for insurrection, and generally the treatment of insurrection as an art, is "Blanquism".[7]

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, has already earned himself unfortunate fame by accusing Marxism of Blanquism, and when our present-day opportunists cry Blanquism they do not improve on or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein one little bit.

Marxists are accused of Blanquism for treating insurrection as an art! Can there be a more flagrant perversion of the truth, when not a single Marxist will deny that it was Marx who expressed himself on this score in the most definite, precise and categorical manner, referring to insurrection specifically as an *art*, saying that it must be treated as an art, that you must *win* the first success and then proceed from success to success, never ceasing the *offensive* against the enemy, taking advantage of his confusion, etc., etc.?

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a *revolutionary upsurge of the people*. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that *turning-point* in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemy and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution*

are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*.

Once these conditions exist, however, to refuse to treat insurrection as an *art* is a betrayal of Marxism and a betrayal of the revolution.

To show that it is precisely the present moment that the Party *must* recognise as the one in which the entire course of events has objectively placed *insurrection* on the order of the day and that insurrection must be treated as an art, it will perhaps be best to use the method of comparison, and to draw a parallel between July 3-4[8] and the September days.

On July 3-4 it could have been argued, without violating the truth, that the correct thing to do was to take power, for our enemies would in any case have accused us of insurrection and ruthlessly treated us as rebels. However, to have decided on this account in favour of taking power at that time would have been wrong, because the objective conditions for the victory of the insurrection did not exist.

(1) We still lacked the support of the class which is the vanguard of the revolution.

We still did not have a majority among the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and Moscow. Now we have a majority in both Soviets. It was created *solely* by the history of July and August, by the experience of the "ruthless treatment" meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov revolt.[9]

(2) There was no country-wide revolutionary upsurge at that time. There is now, after the Kornilov revolt; the situation in the provinces and assumption of power by the Soviets in many localities prove this.

(3) At that time there was no *vacillation* on any serious political scale among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillation is enormous. Our main enemy, Allied and world imperialism (for world imperialism is headed by the "Allies"), *has begun to waver* between a war to a victorious finish and a separate peace directed against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having clearly lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, and have rejected a bloc, i.e., a coalition, with the Cadets.[10]

(4) Therefore, an insurrection on July 3-4 would have been a mistake; we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically even though Petrograd was at times in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for Petrograd. There was not at the time that "savageness", or fierce hatred *both of* the Kerenskys *and of* the Tseretelis and Chernovs. Our people had still not been tempered by the experience of the persecution of the Bolsheviks in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks participated.

We could not have retained power politically on July 3-4 because, *before the Kornilov revolt*, the army and the provinces could and would have marched against Petrograd.

Now the picture is entirely different.

We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.

We have the following of the *majority* of the people, because Chernov's resignation, while by no means the only symptom, is the most striking and obvious symptom that the peasants *will not receive land* from the Socialist-Revolutionaries' bloc (or from the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves). And that is the chief reason for the popular character of the revolution.

We are in the advantageous position of a party that knows for certain which way to go at a lime when *imperialism as a whole* and the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary bloc as a whole are vacillating in an incredible fashion.

Our victory is assured, for the people are close to desperation, and we are showing the entire people a sure way out; we demonstrated to the entire people during the "Kornilov days" the value of our leadership, and then *proposed* to the politicians of the bloc a compromise, *which they rejected*, although there is no let-up in their vacillations.

It would be a great mistake to think that our offer of a compromise had not *yet* been rejected, and that the Democratic Conference may *still* accept it. The compromise was proposed *by a party to parties*; it could not have been proposed in any other way. It was rejected by *parties*. The Democratic Conference is a *conference*, and nothing more.

One thing must not be forgotten, namely, that the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poor, embittered peasants, are not represented in it. It is a conference of *a minority of the people*—this obvious truth must not be forgotten. It would be a big mistake, sheer parliamentary cretinism on our part, if we were to regard the Democratic Conference as a parliament; for even *if it were* to proclaim itself a permanent and sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would nevertheless *decide nothing*. The power of decision lies *outside it* in the working-class quarters of Petrograd and Moscow.

All the objective conditions exist for a successful insurrection. We have the exceptional advantage of a situation in which *only* our victory in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; in which *only* our victory in the insurrection will give the peasants land immediately; a situation in which only *our* victory in the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution—foil it by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace, a peace that will *benefit* the revolution.

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a victorious insurrection, save Petrograd; for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we* shall become "defencists", we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the *war party par excellence*, and we shall conduct the war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away all the bread and boots from the capitalists. We shall leave them only crusts and dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and footwear to the front.

And then we shall save Petrograd.

The resources, both material and spiritual, for a truly revolutionary war in Russia are still immense; the chances are a hundred to one that the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And to secure an armistice now would in itself mean to win the *whole world*.

* * *

Having recognised the absolute necessity for an insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow in order to save the revolution and to save Russia from a "separate"

partition by the imperialists of both groups, we must first adapt our political tactics at the Conference to the conditions of the growing insurrection; secondly, we must show that it is not only in words that we accept Marx's idea that insurrection must be treated as an art.

At the Conference we must immediately cement the Bolshevik group, without striving after numbers, and without fearing to leave the waverers in the waverers' camp. They are more useful to the cause of the revolution *there* than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

We must draw up a brief declaration from the Bolsheviks, emphasising in no uncertain manner the irrelevance of long speeches and of "speeches" in general, the necessity for immediate action to save the revolution, the absolute necessity for a complete break with the bourgeoisie, for the removal of the present government, in its entirety, for a complete rupture with the Anglo-French imperialists, who are preparing a "separate" partition of Russia, and for the immediate transfer of all power to *revolutionary democrats, headed by the revolutionary proletariat*.

Our declaration must give the briefest and most trenchant formulation of *this* conclusion in connection with the programme proposals of peace for the peoples, land for the peasants, confiscation of scandalous profits, and a check on the scandalous sabotage of production by the capitalists.

The briefer and more trenchant the declaration, the better. Only two other highly important points must be clearly indicated in it, namely, that the people are worn out by the vacillations, that they are fed up with the irresolution of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; and that we are definitely breaking with these *parties* because they have betrayed the revolution.

And another thing. By immediately proposing a peace without annexations, by immediately breaking with the Allied imperialists and with all imperialists, either we shall at once obtain an armistice, or the entire revolutionary proletariat will rally to the defence of the country, and a really just, really revolutionary war will then be waged by revolutionary democrats under the leadership of the proletariat.

Having read this declaration, and having appealed for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing, we must *dispatch* our entire group to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there, the pulse of life is there, there is the source of salvation for our revolution, and there is the motive force of the Democratic Conference.

There, in ardent and impassioned speeches, we must explain our programme and put the alternative: either the Conference adopts it *in its entirety*, or else insurrection. There is no middle course. Delay is impossible. The revolution is dying.

By putting the question in this way, by concentrating our entire group in the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to determine the right moment to start the insurrection.*

In order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *headquarters* of the insurgent detachments, distribute our forces, move the reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress,[11] arrest the General Staff and the government, and move against the officer cadets and the Savage Division[12] those detachments which would rather die than allow the enemy to approach the strategic points of the city. We must mobilise the armed workers and call them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telegraph and the telephone exchange at once, move *our* insurrection headquarters to the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution *unless insurrection is treated as an art.*

N. Lenin

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THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND CIVIL WAR

THEY ARE TRYING TO FRIGHTEN US WITH CIVIL WAR

The bourgeoisie, frightened by the refusal of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries to join a bloc with the Cadets, and by the probability of the democrats being quite capable of forming a government without them and governing Russia against them, are doing their best to intimidate the democrats.

Scare them as much as you can! This is the slogan of the whole bourgeois press. Scare them with all your might! Lie, slander, but frighten them!

Birzhevka[13] does its scaring by fabricating news about Bolshevik activities. Others by spreading rumours about Alexeyev's resignation, and about the imminent German offensive against Petrograd, as if the facts do not prove that it is the Kornilov generals (to whom Alexeyev undoubtedly belongs) who are capable of opening the front to the Germans in Galicia and near Riga and near Petrograd, and that it is the Kornilov generals who are arousing the greatest hatred in the army against the General Staff.

To make this method of intimidating the democrats more "solid" and convincing, they refer to the danger of "civil war". Of all the methods of intimidation, that of scaring with civil war is perhaps the most widespread. Here is the way the Rostov-on-the-Don Committee of the people's freedom party formulated this widespread idea, heartily welcomed in philistine circles, in its resolution of September 1 (*Rech*[14] No. 210):

"The Committee is convinced that civil war may sweep away all the gains of the revolution and drown in rivers of blood our young, still unstable freedom, and is of the opinion that it is necessary to

make an energetic protest against developing the revolution as proposed by the unrealisable socialist utopias if we are to save the gains of the revolution."

Here, the fundamental idea which is to be met with innumerable times in *Rech* editorials, in the articles of Plekhanov and Potresov, in the editorials of Menshevik papers, etc., etc., is expressed in the clearest, most precise, well considered and substantial form. It will therefore be useful to take up this idea in greater detail.

Let us try to make a more concrete analysis of the civil war question, on the basis of the half year's experience of our revolution, among other things.

This experience, similarly to the experience of all European revolutions, from the end of the eighteenth century on, shows that civil war is the sharpest form of the class struggle, it is that point in the class struggle when clashes and battles, economic and political, repeating themselves, growing, broadening, becoming acute, turn into an armed struggle of one class against another. More often than not—one may say almost always—in all more or less free and advanced countries the civil war is between those classes whose antagonistic position towards each other is created and deepened by the entire economic development of capitalism, by the entire history of modern society the world over—civil war is between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

During the past half year of our revolution, we have experienced very strong spontaneous outbursts (April 20-21,[15] July 3-4) in which the proletariat came very close to starting a civil war. On the other hand, the Kornilov revolt was a military conspiracy supported by the landowners and capitalists led by the Cadet Party, a conspiracy by which the bourgeoisie has actually begun a civil war.

Such are the facts. Such is the history of our own revolution. More than anything we must learn from this history, we must give a great deal of thought to the course it has taken and to its class significance.

Let us try to compare the germs of the proletarian civil war and the bourgeois civil war in Russia from the standpoint of (1) the spontaneous nature of the movement; (2) its aims; (3) the political consciousness of the masses participat-

ing in it; (4) the forces in the movement; (5) its tenacity. We think that if all the parties which are now "unnecessarily throwing about" the words "civil war" were to approach the question in this way, and make a real attempt to study the germs of the civil war, the class consciousness of the entire Russian revolution would gain a very great deal.

Let us begin with the spontaneous nature of the movement. For the July 3-4 movement we have the testimony of such witnesses as the Menshevik *Rabochaya Gazeta*[16] and the Socialist-Revolutionary *Dyelo Naroda*[17] which have recognised the spontaneous origin of the movement. This testimony I quoted in an article published in *Proletarskoye Dyelo*,[18] and issued as a separate leaflet entitled *An Answer*.* For obvious reasons, however, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are defending themselves and the part they played in persecuting the Bolsheviks, officially continue to deny the spontaneous nature of the outburst of July 3-4.

Let us put the controversial matter aside for the present. Let us take what is undisputed. No one denies the spontaneous nature of the April 20-21 movement. The Bolshevik Party joined this spontaneous movement under the slogan "All Power to the Soviets"; independently of the Bolsheviks it was joined by the late Linde, who led 30,000 armed soldiers into the street ready to arrest the government. (The action of these troops, let us say in parenthesis, has not been investigated and studied. If it is examined closely, and April 20 is given its place in the historic sequence of events, i.e., if it is seen as a link in the chain which extends from February 28 to August 29, it becomes clear that the fault and the error of the Bolsheviks was the *insufficient* revolutionism of their tactics, and by no means the excessive revolutionism the philistines, accuse us of.)

The spontaneous nature of the movement leading to the proletariat beginning civil war is thus beyond doubt. On the other hand, there is not even a trace of anything resembling spontaneity in the Kornilov revolt; it was merely a conspiracy of generals who hoped by fraud and by the force of military command to carry part of the army with them.

* See present edition, Vol. 25.—*Ed.*

It is beyond all doubt that the spontaneity of the movement is proof that it is deeply rooted in the masses, that its roots are firm and that it is inevitable. The proletarian revolution is firmly rooted, the bourgeois counter-revolution is without roots—this is what the facts prove if examined from the point of view of the spontaneous nature of the movement.

Let us now look at the aims of the movement. The movement of April 20-21 came very close to adopting the Bolshevik slogans, whereas that of July 3-4 was directly connected with them, was under their influence and guidance. The Bolshevik Party spoke quite openly, definitely, clearly, precisely, for all to hear, in its papers and in verbal propaganda of the chief *aims* of the proletarian civil war—the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, peace and an immediate offer of peace, confiscation of the landed estates.

We all know the aims of the Kornilov revolt, and no one among the democrats disputes that those aims were a dictatorship of the landowners and the bourgeoisie, dispersal of the Soviets, and preparations for the restoration of the monarchy. The Cadet Party, this main Kornilovite party (by the way, it ought to be called from now on the Kornilov party), possesses a larger press and greater forces for propaganda than the Bolsheviks, but it has never dared and still does not dare to tell the people openly either about the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or about the dispersal of the Soviets, or about the Kornilovite aims in general!

As far-as the aims of the movement are concerned, the facts tell us that the proletarian civil war can come out with an open exposition of its final aims before the people and win the sympathies of the working people, whereas the bourgeois civil war can attempt to lead part of the masses only by concealing its aims; this is the tremendous difference in them as far as the class-consciousness of the masses is concerned.

The only objective data on this question seem to be those on party affiliation and elections. There do not appear to be any other facts which allow a clear judgement of the class-consciousness of the masses. It is clear that the pro-

letarian-revolutionary movement is represented by the Bolshevik Party, and the bourgeois counter-revolutionary movement by the Cadet Party, and this can hardly be disputed after six months' experience of the revolution. Three comparisons of a factual nature can be made that concern the question under consideration. A comparison of the May elections to the local councils in Petrograd with the August elections to the city council shows a decrease in Cadet votes and a tremendous increase in Bolshevik votes. The Cadet press admits that, as a rule, Bolshevism is strong wherever masses of workers or soldiers are concentrated.

In the absence of any statistics concerning the fluctuation of the party membership, attendance at meetings, etc., the conscious support of the party by the *masses* may be judged only from published data concerning cash collections for the party. These data show a tremendous mass-scale heroism on the part of worker Bolsheviks in collecting money for *Pravda*,[19] for the papers that have been suppressed, etc. The reports of such collections have always been published. Among the Cadets we see nothing of the kind; their party work is obviously being "nourished" by contributions from the rich. There is no trace of active aid on the part of the masses.

Lastly, a comparison of the movements of April 20-21 and July 3-4 on the one hand, and the Kornilov revolt on the other, shows that the Bolsheviks indicated point-blank to the masses who their enemy in the civil war is, namely, the bourgeoisie, the landowners and capitalists. The Kornilov revolt has already demonstrated that the troops who followed Kornilov did so because they had been *completely deceived*, a fact made obvious the moment the Savage Division and Kornilov's contingents came up against the Petrograd masses.

Furthermore, what data indicate the *strength* of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the civil war? The Bolsheviks are strong only in the numbers and class-consciousness of the proletarians, in the sympathy with the Bolshevik slogans displayed by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik "rank and file" (i.e., workers and poor peasants). It is a fact that these slogans actually won over the *majority*

of the active revolutionary masses in Petrograd on April 20-21, June 18,[20] and July 3-4.

A comparison of the data on the "parliamentary" elections and the data on the above-named mass movements fully corroborates, in respect of Russia, an observation often made in the West, namely, that the revolutionary proletariat is incomparably *stronger* in the *extra-parliamentary* than in the parliamentary struggle, as far as influencing the *masses* and drawing them into the struggle is concerned. This is a very important observation in respect of civil war.

It is quite clear why in all the circumstances and the entire situation of parliamentary struggle and elections the strength of the oppressed classes is less than the strength they can actually develop in civil war.

The strength of the Cadets and the Kornilov revolt is the strength of *wealth*. The press and a long series of political actions show that Anglo-French capital and imperialism are *in favour* of the Cadets and the Kornilov movement. It is common knowledge that the entire Right wing of the Moscow Conference[21] of August 12 gave frantic support to Kornilov and Kaledin. It is common knowledge that the French and British bourgeois press "aided" Kornilov. There are indications of his having been aided by the *banks*.

All the power of wealth stood behind Kornilov—and what a miserable and rapid failure! There are only two social forces among Kornilov's supporters apart from the wealthy—the Savage Division and the Cossacks. In the case of the former it is *only* the power of ignorance and deception, and this power is the more formidable the longer the press remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie. After a victory in the civil war, the proletariat would undermine *this* source of "power" once and for all.

As to the Cossacks, they are a section of the population consisting of rich, small or medium landed proprietors (the average holding is about 50 dessiatines) in one of those outlying regions of Russia that have retained many medieval traits in their way of life, their economy, and their customs. We can regard this as the socio-economic basis for a Russian Vendée.[22] But what have the *facts* of the Kornilov-Kaledin movement proved? Not even Kaledin, the "beloved leader"

supported by the Guchkovs, Milyukovs, Ryabushinskys and Co., has *succeeded* in creating a mass movement!! Kaledin marched towards civil war much more "directly", much more forthrightly than did the Bolsheviks. Kaledin went specifically "to rouse the Don", and still he has not aroused a mass movement in his "home" region, in a Cossack region far removed from Russian democracy in general. On the part of the proletariat, on the contrary, we observe spontaneous outbursts of the movement in the very centre of the influence and power of anti-Bolshevik, all-Russia democracy.

Objective data on the attitude of various strata and economic groups of the Cossacks towards democracy and towards the Kornilov revolt are lacking. There are only indications to the effect that the majority of the poor and middle Cossacks are rather inclined towards democracy and that only the officers and the top layer of the well-to-do Cossacks are entirely in favour of Kornilov.

However that may be, the extreme weakness of a mass Cossack movement in favour of a bourgeois counter-revolution has been historically proved since the experience of August 26-31.

There remains the last question, that of the *tenacity* of the movement. As far as the Bolshevik, proletarian revolutionary movement is concerned, we have proof that the struggle against Bolshevism has been conducted during the six months' existence of a republic in Russia both ideologically, with a *gigantic* preponderance of press organs and propaganda forces on the side of the opponents of Bolshevism (even if we risk classing the campaign of slander as "ideological" struggle), and *by means of repressions*, which include hundreds of people arrested, our main printing-plant demolished, and the chief newspaper and a number of other papers suppressed. The result can be seen in the facts—a tremendous growth of support for the Bolsheviks in the August Petrograd elections, and in both the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, a strengthening of the internationalist and Left trends that are drawing close to Bolshevism. This means that the tenacity of the proletarian revolutionary movement in republican Russia is very great. The facts tell us that the combined efforts

of the Cadets, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks *have not succeeded* in weakening that movement in the least. On the contrary, it was the alliance of the Kornilovites with "democracy" that *strengthened* Bolshevism. The only possible means of struggle against the proletarian revolutionary trend are ideological influence *and* repressions.

Data on the tenacity of the Cadet-Kornilov movement are still lacking. The Cadets have suffered no persecution at all. Even Guchkov has been set free and Maklakov and Milyukov were not even arrested. *Rech* has not been suppressed. The Cadets are being spared. The Kornilovite Cadets are being *courted* by Kerensky's government. Suppose we put it this way: assuming that the Anglo-French and the Russian Ryabushinskys will give millions and millions more to the Cadets, to *Yedinstvo*,[23] *Dyen*,[24] etc., for the new election campaign in Petrograd, is it probable that the number of their votes will now increase, after the Kornilov revolt? Judging by meetings, etc., the answer to this question can hardly be anything but negative.

* * *

Summing up the results of the analysis in which we compared the data furnished by the history of the Russian revolution, we arrive at the conclusion that the beginning of the proletariat's civil war has revealed the strength, the class-consciousness, deep-rootedness, growth, and tenacity of the movement. The beginning of the bourgeoisie's civil war has revealed no strength, no class-consciousness among the masses, no depth whatsoever, no chance of victory.

The alliance of the Cadets with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks, i.e., against the revolutionary proletariat, has been tried in practice for a number of months, and this alliance of the temporarily disguised Kornilovites with the "democrats" has actually strengthened and not weakened the Bolsheviks, and led to the collapse of the "alliance", and to the strengthening of the Left opposition among the Mensheviks.

An alliance of the Bolsheviks with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks against the Cadets, against

the bourgeoisie, *has not yet been tried*; or, to be more precise, such an alliance *has been tried on one front only*, for *five days* only, from August 26 to August 31, the period of the Kornilov revolt, and this alliance at that time scored a victory over the counter-revolution with an ease never yet achieved in any revolution; it was such a crushing suppression of the bourgeois, landowners', capitalist, Allied-imperialist and Cadet counter-revolution, that the civil war *from that side* ceased to exist, was a mere nothing from the very outset, collapsed before any "battle" had taken place.

In the face of this historic fact the entire bourgeois press and all its chorus (the Plekhanovs, Potresovs, Breshko-Breshkovskayas, etc.) are shouting with all their might that an alliance of the Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries "threatens" the horrors of civil war!

This would be funny, if it were not so sad. It is sad indeed that such an open, self-evident, glaring absurdity, such a flouting of the facts of the whole history of our revolution, can still find listeners.... This only proves that the selfish bourgeois lie is still widespread (and this cannot be avoided as long as the press is monopolised by the bourgeoisie), a lie that shouts down and drowns the most undoubted, palpably obvious lessons of the revolution.

If there is an absolutely undisputed lesson of the revolution, one fully proved by facts, it is that only an alliance of the Bolsheviks with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, only an immediate transfer of all power to the Soviets would make civil war in Russia impossible, for a civil war begun by the bourgeoisie against such an alliance, against the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, is inconceivable; such a "war" would not last even until the first battle; the bourgeoisie, *for the second time* since the Kornilov revolt, would not be able to move even the Savage Division, or the former number of Cossack units against the Soviet Government!

The peaceful development of any revolution is, generally speaking, extremely rare and difficult, because revolution is the maximum exacerbation of the sharpest class contradictions; but in a peasant country, at a time when

a union of the proletariat with the peasantry *can* give *peace* to people worn out by a most unjust and criminal war, when that union can give the peasantry *all the land*, in that country, at that exceptional moment in history, a peaceful development of the revolution is *possible* and *probable* if all power is transferred to the Soviets. The struggle of parties for power within the Soviets may proceed peacefully, if the Soviets are made fully democratic, and "petty thefts" and violations of democratic principles, such as giving the soldiers one representative to every five hundred, while the workers have one representative to every thousand voters, are eliminated. In a democratic republic such petty thefts will have to disappear.

When confronted with Soviets that have given all the land to the peasants without compensation and offer a just peace to all the peoples—when confronted with such Soviets the alliance of the British, French and Russian bourgeoisie, the Kornilovs, Buchanans,[25] Ryabushinskys, Milyukovs, Plekhanovs, and Potresovs is quite impotent and is not to be feared.

The bourgeoisie's resistance to the transfer of the land to the peasants without compensation, to similar reforms in other realms of life, to a just peace and a break with imperialism, is, of course, inevitable. But for such resistance to reach the stage of civil war, *masses* of some kind are necessary, masses capable of *fighting* and vanquishing the Soviets. The bourgeoisie does *not* have these masses, and has nowhere to get them. The sooner and the more resolutely the Soviets take all power, the sooner both Savage Divisions and Cossacks will split into an insignificant minority of politically-conscious Kornilov supporters and a huge majority of those in favour of a democratic and *socialist* (for it is with socialism that we shall then be dealing) alliance of workers and peasants.

When power passes to the Soviets, the resistance of the bourgeoisie will result in *scores and hundreds* of workers and peasants "keeping track of", supervising, controlling, and registering *every single* capitalist, for the interests of the workers and peasants will demand struggle against the capitalists' deception of the people. The forms and methods of this accountancy and control have been devel-

oped and simplified by capitalism itself, by such capitalist creations as banks, big factories, trusts, railways, the post office, consumers' societies, and trade unions. If the Soviets punish those capitalists who evade the most detailed accounting or who deceive the people, punish them by confiscating all their property and arresting them for a short time, that will be sufficient to break all the resistance of the bourgeoisie by bloodless means. For it is through the banks, once they are nationalised, through the unions of employees, through the post office, the consumers' societies, and the trade unions, that control and the accounting will become universal, all-powerful, and irresistible.

And Russia's Soviets, the alliance of her workers and poor peasants, are not alone in the *steps* they take *towards* socialism. If we were alone, we should not be able to accomplish this task peacefully, for it is essentially an international task. But we have enormous reserves, the armies of the most advanced workers in other countries, where Russia's break with imperialism and the imperialist war will inevitably accelerate the workers' socialist revolution that is maturing.

* * *

Some speak about "rivers of blood" in a civil war. This is mentioned in the resolution of the Kornilovite Cadets quoted above. This phrase is repeated in a thousand ways by all the bourgeois and opportunists. Since the Kornilov revolt all the class-conscious workers laugh, will continue to laugh and cannot help laughing at it.

However, the question of "rivers of blood" in the present time of war can and must be studied by an approximate computation of forces, consequences, and results; it must be taken seriously and not as an empty stock phrase, not as simply the hypocrisy of the Cadets, who have done *everything* in their power *to enable* Kornilov to drown Russia in "rivers of blood", and to restore the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the power of the landowners, and the monarchy.

"Rivers of blood," they say. Let us analyse *this* aspect of the question as well.

Let us assume that the vacillations of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries continue; that these parties

do *not* hand over power to the Soviets; that they do *not* overthrow Kerensky; that they restore the old rotten compromise with the bourgeoisie in a somewhat different form (say, "non-partisan" *Kornilovites* instead of Cadets); that they do not replace the apparatus of state power by the Soviet apparatus, do not offer peace, do not break with imperialism, and do not confiscate the landed estates. Let us assume that this is the outcome of the present wavering of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, of this present "September 12".

The experience of our own revolution tells us most clearly that the consequence of this would be a still further weakening of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, their further separation from the masses, an incredible growth of indignation and bitterness among the masses, a tremendous growth of sympathy with the revolutionary proletariat, with the Bolsheviks.

Under such conditions, the proletariat of the capital will be still closer to a Commune, to a workers' uprising, to the conquest of power, to a civil war in its highest and most decisive form, than it is at present; after the experience of April 20-21 and July 3-4 such a result must be recognised as historically inevitable.

"Rivers of blood," shout the Cadets. But such rivers of blood would give victory to the proletariat and the poor peasantry, and it is a hundred to one that this victory would bring *peace* in place of the imperialist war, i.e., that it would save the lives of *hundreds of thousands* of men who are now shedding their blood for the sake of a division of spoils and seizures (annexations) by the capitalists. If April 20-21 had ended by the transfer of all power to the Soviets, and the Bolsheviks in alliance with the poor peasantry had won in the Soviets, it would have saved the lives of the *half million* Russian soldiers, who certainly perished in the battles of June 18, even if it had cost "rivers of blood".

This is how every class-conscious Russian worker and soldier figures, this is how he must figure, if he weighs and analyses the question of civil war now being raised everywhere; and, of course, such a worker or soldier, who has experienced many things and given thought to them,

will not be frightened by the cries of "rivers of blood" raised by individuals, parties and groups willing to sacrifice *more millions* of Russian soldiers for the sake of Constantinople, Lvov, Warsaw, and "victory over Germany".

No "rivers of blood" in an internal civil war can even approximately equal those *seas* of blood which the Russian imperialists have shed since June 19 (in spite of the very great chances they had of avoiding this by handing over power to the Soviets).

All you Milyukovs, Potresovs and Plekhanovs be careful about your arguments *against* "rivers of blood" in civil war while this present war continues, for the soldiers have seen *seas* of blood and know what they mean.

The international situation of the Russian revolution now, in 1917, the fourth year of a terrifically burdensome and criminal war, that has worn out the peoples, is such that an offer of a just peace on the part of a Russian proletariat victorious in the civil war would have a hundred to one chance of achieving an armistice and peace *without the shedding of further seas of blood*.

For a combination of warring Anglo-French and German imperialism *against* the proletarian socialist Russian Republic is *impossible* in practice, while a combination of British, Japanese and American imperialism against us is extremely difficult to realise and is not at all dangerous to us, if only because of Russia's geographical position. On the other hand, the existence of revolutionary and socialist proletarian masses in *all* the European states is a fact; the maturing and the inevitability of the world-wide socialist revolution is beyond doubt, and such a revolution can be seriously aided only by the progress of the Russian revolution and not by delegations and not by playing at Stockholm conferences with the foreign Plekhanovs or Tseretelis.

The bourgeoisie wails about the inevitable defeat of a Commune in Russia, i.e., defeat of the proletariat if it were to conquer power.

These are false, selfish class wailings.

If the proletariat gains power it will have *every* chance of retaining it and of leading Russia until there is a victorious revolution in the West.

In the first place, we have learned much since the Commune, and we would not repeat its fatal errors, we would not leave the banks in the hands of the bourgeoisie, we would not confine ourselves to defence against the Versaillais (or the Kornilovites) but would take the offensive against them and crush them.

Secondly, the victorious proletariat would give Russia peace, and no power on earth would be able to overthrow a government of *peace*, a government of an honest, sincere, just peace, after all the horrors of more than three years' butchery of the peoples.

Thirdly, the victorious proletariat would give the peasantry the land immediately and without compensation. And a tremendous majority of the peasantry—worn out and embittered by the "playing around with the landowners" practised by our government, particularly the coalition government, particularly the Kerensky government—would support the victorious proletariat absolutely, unreservedly, with every means in its power.

You Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are all talking about the "heroic efforts" of the people. Only recently I came across this phrase for the nth time in the leading article of your *Izvestia*[26] of the Central Executive Committee. With you it is a *mere* phrase. But the workers and peasants read it and *think* about it, and such deliberation—reinforced by the experience of the Kornilov revolt, by the "experience" of Peshekhonov's ministry, by the "experience" of Chernov's ministry, *and so forth*—every such deliberation inevitably leads to the conclusion that this "heroic effort" is nothing but confidence of the poor peasantry in the city workers as their most faithful allies and leaders. The heroic effort is nothing but the victory of the Russian proletariat over the bourgeoisie in civil war, for such a victory alone will save the country from painful vacillations, it alone will show the way out, it alone will give land and peace.

If an alliance between the city workers and the poor peasantry can be effected through an immediate transfer of power to the Soviets, so much the better. The Bolsheviks will do *everything* to secure this *peaceful* development of the revolution. Without this, even the Constituent Assem-

bly, by itself, will not save the situation, for even there the Socialist-Revolutionaries may continue their "playing" at agreements with the Cadets, with Breshko-Breshkovskaya and Kerensky (in what way are they better than Cadets?), and so on, and so forth.

If even the experience of the Kornilov revolt has taught the "democrats" nothing, and they continue the destructive policy of vacillation and compromise, we say that nothing is more ruinous to the proletarian revolution than these vacillations. That being the case, do not frighten us, gentlemen, with civil war. Civil war is inevitable, if you do not wish to break with Kornilovism and the "coalition" right now, once and for all. This war will bring victory over the exploiters, it will give the land to the peasants, it will give peace to the peoples, it will open the right road to the victorious revolution of the world socialist proletariat.

Rabochy Put No. 12,
September 29 (16), 1917
Signed: N. Lenin

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HEROES OF FRAUD AND THE MISTAKES OF THE BOLSHEVIKS[27]

The so-called Democratic Conference is over. Thank God, one more farce is behind us and still we are advancing, provided fate has no more than a certain number of farces in store for our revolution.

In order correctly to judge the political results of the Conference, we must attempt to ascertain its precise class significance as indicated by objective facts.

Further break-up of the government parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; their obvious loss of the majority among the revolutionary democrats; one more step towards linking up Mr. Kerensky and Messrs. Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. and exposing the Bonapartism they share—such is the class significance of the Conference.

In the Soviets, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have lost their majority. They therefore have had to resort to a fraud—they have violated their pledge to call a new congress of the Soviets in three months. They have evaded reporting back to those who elected the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets; and they have rigged the "Democratic" Conference. The Bolsheviks spoke of this fraud prior to the Conference, and the results fully confirmed their correctness. The Lieberdans[28] and the Tseretelis, Chernovs and Co. saw that their majority in the Soviets was dwindling, therefore they resorted to a fraud.

Arguments like that which says that co-operatives and also "properly" elected city and Zemstvo representatives "are already of great significance among the democratic organisations", are so flimsy that it is nothing but crass

hypocrisy to advance them seriously. First of all, the Central Executive Committee was elected by the Soviets, and its refusal to deliver a report and relinquish office to *the Soviets*, is a Bonapartist fraud. Secondly, the Soviets represent revolutionary democracy insofar as they are joined by those who wish to fight in a revolutionary way. Their doors are not closed to members of the co-operatives and city dwellers. Those same Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks ran the Soviets.

Those who remained *only* in the co-operatives, who confined themselves *only* to municipal (city and Zemstvo) work, voluntarily separated themselves from the ranks of revolutionary democracy, thereby attaching themselves to a democracy that was either reactionary or neutral. Everybody knows that co-operative and municipal work is done *not only* by revolutionaries, but *also* by reactionaries; everybody knows that people are elected to co-operatives and municipalities primarily for work that is *not* of general political scope and importance.

The aim of the Lieberdans, Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. when they rigged the Conference was to bring up reserves secretly from among the adherents of *Yedinstvo* and "non-partisan" reactionaries. That was the fraud they perpetrated. That was their Bonapartism, which allies them with the Bonapartist Kerensky. They robbed democracy while hypocritically keeping up democratic appearances—this is the essence of the matter.

Nicholas II stole, figuratively, large sums from democracy. He convened representative institutions but gave the landowners a hundredfold greater representation than the peasants. The Lieberdans, Tseretelis, and Chernovs steal petty sums from democracy; they convoke a Democratic Conference where *both* workers and peasants point with full justice to the curtailment of their representation, to *lack* of proportionality, to *discrimination* in favour of members of the co-operatives and municipal councils closest to the bourgeoisie (and reactionary democracy).

The Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs have parted ways with the masses of poor workers and peasants. They saved themselves by the fraud that keeps their Kerensky going.

The demarcation of classes is progressing. A protest is growing in the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, a direct split is maturing because the "leaders" have betrayed the interests of the majority of the population. The leaders are relying on the support of a *minority*, in defiance of the principles of democracy. Fraud is *inevitable* as far as they are concerned.

Kerensky is revealing himself more and more as a Bonapartist. He was considered a Socialist-Revolutionary. Now we know that he is not merely a "March" Socialist-Revolutionary who ran over to them from the Trudoviks "for advertising purposes". He is an adherent of Breshko-Breshkovskaya, the Socialist-Revolutionary Mrs. Plekhanov, or Mrs. Potresov in their *Dyen*. The so-called Right wing of the so-called socialist parties, the Plekhanovs, Breshkovskayas, Potresovs, is where Kerensky *belongs*; this wing, however, does not differ substantially from the Cadets *in anything*.

The Cadets have good reason to praise Kerensky. He pursues *their* policies and confers with them and with Rodzyanko *behind the back of the people*; he has been exposed by Chernov and others as conniving with Savinkov, a friend of Kornilov's. Kerensky is a *Kornilovite*; by sheer *accident* he has had a quarrel with Kornilov himself, but he remains in the most intimate alliance with other Kornilovites. This is a *fact*, proved by the revelations about Savinkov, by *Dyelo Naroda* and by the continuation of the political game, Kerensky's "ministerial leapfrog" with the Kornilovites disguised under the name of the "commercial and industrial class".

Secret pacts with the Kornilov gang, secret hobnobbing (through Tereshchenko and Co.) with the imperialist "Allies"; secret obstruction and sabotage of the Constituent Assembly; secret deception of the peasants by way of service to Rodzyanko, i.e., the landowners (by doubling the price of bread)—this is what Kerensky is *really* doing. This is his *class* policy. This is his Bonapartism.

To conceal this from the Conference, the Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs had to resort to a fraud.

The Bolshevik participation in this hideous fraud, in this farce, had the same justification as their participa-

tion in the Third Duma[29]; even in a "pigsty" we must uphold our line, even from a "pigsty" we must send out material exposing the enemy for the instruction of the people.

The difference, however, is this, that the Third Duma was convened when the revolution was obviously ebbing, while at present there is an obvious upsurge of a *new revolution*; of the scope and the pace of this upsurge, however, we unfortunately know very little.

* * *

The most characteristic episode of the Conference was, in my opinion, Zarudny's speech. He tells us that as soon as Kerensky "as much as hinted" at reorganising the government, all the ministers began to hand in their resignations. "The following day," continues the naïve, childishly naïve (a good thing if he is *only* naïve), Zarudny, "the following day, notwithstanding our resignation, we were called, we were consulted, and finally we were prevailed upon to stay."

"General laughter in the hall," remarks at this point the official *Izvestia*.

Gay folk, those participants in the Bonapartist deception of the people by the republicans. We are all revolutionary democrats—no joking!

"From the very beginning," says Zarudny, "we heard two things; we were to strive to make the army capable of fighting, and to hasten peace on a democratic basis. Well, as far as peace is concerned, I do not know whether, during the six weeks I have been a member of the Provisional Government, the Provisional Government has done anything about it. I did not notice it. (*Applause and a voice from the audience*: "It did nothing", *Izvestia* remarks.) When I, as a member of the Provisional Government, inquired about it, I received no reply...."

Thus speaks Zarudny, according to the report of the official *Izvestia*. And the Conference listen in silence, tolerate such things, do not stop the orator, do not interrupt the session, do not jump to their feet and chase out Kerensky and the government! How could they? These "revolutionary democrats" are for Kerensky to a man!

Very well, gentlemen, but then, wherein does the term

"revolutionary democrat" differ from the terms "lackey" and "scoundrel"?

It is natural that these lackeys are capable of roaring with laughter when "their" Minister, noted for his rare naïveté or rare stupidity, tells them how Kerensky keeps removing and replacing ministers (in order to come to terms with the Kornilov gang behind the hack of the people and "in full privacy"). It is not surprising that the lackeys keep silent when "their" Minister, who seems to have taken general phrases about peace seriously without seeing their hypocrisy, admits that he did not even receive a reply to his question about real steps towards peace. Such is the fate of lackeys, to allow themselves to be fooled by the government. But what has this to do with revolution, what has it to do with democracy?

Would it be surprising if revolutionary soldiers and workers were to get the idea that it would be good if the ceiling of the Alexandrinsky Theatre were to fall and crush all that gang of pitiful scoundrels who can sit there in silence when it is being demonstrated to them that Kerensky and Co. are fooling them with their talk about peace, who can roar with laughter when they are told as clearly as can be by their own ministers that ministerial leapfrog is a farce (concealing Kerensky's dealings with the Kornilovites). God save us from our friends, we can cope with our enemies ourselves! God save us from these claimants to revolutionary democratic leadership, we can cope with the Kerenskys, Cadets and Kornilovites ourselves!

* * *

And now I come to the errors of the Bolsheviks. To have confined themselves to ironic applause and exclamations at such a moment was an error.

The people are weary of vacillations and delays. Dissatisfaction is obviously growing. A new revolution is approaching. The reactionary democrats, the Lieberdans, Tseretelis and others, wish only to *distract* the attention of the people with their farce of a "conference", *keep them busy* with it, *cut* the Bolsheviks *off* from the masses, and *provide* the Bolshevik delegates with the unworthy occupation of

sitting and listening to the Zarudnys! And the Zarudnys are not the least sincere of them!

The Bolsheviks should have walked out of the meeting in protest and not allowed themselves to be caught by the conference trap set to divert the people's attention from serious questions. The Bolsheviks should have left two or three of their 136 delegates for "liaison work", that is, to report by telephone the moment the idiotic babbling came to an end and the voting began. They *should not have allowed themselves to be kept busy* with obvious nonsense for the obvious purpose of deceiving the people with the obvious aim of *extinguishing* the growing revolution by wasting time on trivial matters.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Bolshevik delegation ought to have gone to the factories and barracks; that was the proper place for delegates who had come from all ends of Russia and who, after Zarudny's speech, could see the full depth of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik rottenness. There, closer to the masses, at hundreds and thousands of meetings and talks, they ought to have discussed the lessons of this farcical conference whose obvious purpose was only to give a respite to the Kornilovite Kerensky and make it easier for him to try new variations of the "ministerial leapfrog" game.

The Bolsheviks, it turned out, had a wrong attitude to parliamentarism in moments of revolutionary (and not constitutional) crises, an incorrect attitude to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

How it happened can be understood—history made a very sharp turn at the time of the Kornilov revolt. The Party failed to keep pace with the incredibly fast tempo of history at this turning-point. The Party allowed itself to be diverted, for the time being, into the trap of a despicable talking-shop.

They should have left one hundredth of their forces for that talking-shop and devoted ninety-nine hundredths to the *masses*.

If the turn taken by history called for a compromise with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (personally I believe it did) the Bolsheviks should have proposed it clearly, openly and speedily, so that they could *immediate-*

ly turn to account the possible and probable refusal of the Bonapartist Kerensky's friends to agree to a compromise with them.

The refusal was already indicated by articles in *Dyelo Naroda* and *Rabochaya Gazeta on the eve* of the Conference. The masses should have been told as officially, openly and clearly as possible, they should have been told without the *loss of a minute*, that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had rejected our offer of a compromise—Down with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks! The Conference could have afforded "to laugh" at the naïveté of Zarudny to the accompaniment of *this* slogan in the factories and barracks!

The atmosphere of a certain enthusiasm for the Conference and the situation surrounding it seems to have been built up from various sides. Comrade Zinoviev made a mistake in writing about the Commune so ambiguously (ambiguously, to say the least) that it appeared that the Commune, although victorious in Petrograd, might be defeated *as in France in 1871*. This is absolutely untrue. If the Commune were victorious in Petrograd *it would be victorious* throughout Russia. It was a mistake on his part to write that the Bolsheviks did right in proposing a proportional composition for the Presidium of the Petrograd Soviet. The revolutionary proletariat would never do anything worth while *in the Soviet* as long as the Tseretelis were allowed proportional participation; to let them in meant *depriving ourselves* of the opportunity to work, it meant *the ruin* of Soviet work. Comrade Kamenev was wrong in delivering the first speech at the Conference in a purely "constitutional" spirit when he raised the foolish question of confidence or non-confidence in the government. If, at such a meeting, it was *not possible* to tell *the truth* about the Kornilovite Kerensky that had *already* been told both in *Rabochy Put*[30] and the Moscow *Sotsial-Demokrat*,[31] why not refer to those papers and *make it well known to the masses* that the Conference did not want to listen to the truth about the Kornilovite Kerensky?

It was a mistake on the part of the Petrograd workers' delegations to send speakers to *such* a conference after

Zarudny had spoken and the situation had been made clear. Why cast pearls before Kerensky's friends? Why divert the attention of proletarian forces to a farcical conference? Why did those delegations not go quite peacefully and legally to the barracks and the more backward factories? That would have been a million times more useful, essential, serious and to the point than the journey to the Alexandrinsky Theatre and chats with co-operators who sympathise with *Yedinstvo* and Kerensky.

Ten soldiers or ten workers from a backward factory who have become politically enlightened *are worth a thousand times more* than a *hundred* delegates hand-picked from various delegations by the Lieberdans. Parliamentarism should be used, especially in revolutionary times, not to waste valuable time over representatives of what is rotten, but *to use the example of what is rotten to teach the masses*.

Why should those same proletarian delegations not "use" the Conference to publish, say, two posters explaining that the Conference is a farce and *to display* them in barracks and factories? One of the posters could depict Zarudny in a fool's cap, dancing on the stage and singing the song "Kerensky *sacked* us, Kerensky *took* us *back*". Around him stand Tsereteli, Chernov, Skobelev and a co-operator arm-in-arm with Lieber and Dan, all rolling with laughter. Caption—*They are Happy*.

Poster number two. Zarudny again in front of the same audience saying "I asked about peace for six weeks. *I got no answer*". The audience is silent, their faces express "statesmanlike importance". Tsereteli looks particularly important as he writes in his notebook "What a fool that Zarudny is! The imbecile should be carting dung instead of being a minister. He is an advocate of the coalition and undermines it worse than a hundred Bolsheviks! He was a minister but he never learned to speak like one, he should have said, 'I continuously followed the campaign for peace for six weeks and I am fully convinced of its final success precisely under the coalition government in accordance with the great idea of Stockholm, etc., etc.' Then even *Russkaya Volya*[32] would have praised Zarudny as the knight of the Russian revolution."

Caption: "Revolutionary-democratic" conference of male prostitutes.

Written *before* the end of the Conference; change the first phrase to something like "In all essentials the so-called Democratic...."

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Signed: N. Lenin

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FROM A PUBLICIST'S DIARY

THE MISTAKES OF OUR PARTY

Friday, September 22, 1917.

The more one reflects on the meaning of the so-called Democratic Conference, and the more attentively one observes from outside—and it is said that the bystander sees most—the more firmly convinced one becomes that our Party committed a mistake by participating in it. We should have boycotted it. One may ask if there is any use in analysing such a question since the past cannot be remedied. Such an objection to criticising the tactics of yesterday, however, would be clearly unfounded. We have always condemned, and as Marxists we must condemn, the tactics of those who live "from hand to mouth". Momentary success is not enough for us. In general, plans calculated for a minute or a day are not enough for us. We must constantly test ourselves by a *study* of the chain of political events in their entirety, in their causal connection, in their results. By analysing the errors of yesterday, we learn to avoid errors today and tomorrow.

A new revolution is obviously maturing in the country, a revolution of *other* classes (other than those that carried out the revolution against tsarism). At that time it was a revolution of the proletariat, the peasantry and the bourgeoisie in alliance with Anglo-French finance capital against tsarism.

The revolution now maturing is one of the proletariat and the majority of the peasants, more specifically, of the poor peasants, against the bourgeoisie, against its ally,

Anglo-French finance capital and against its government apparatus headed by the Bonapartist Kerensky.

At the moment we shall not dwell on the facts testifying to the rise of a new revolution, since, judging by the articles in *Rabochy Put*, our Central Organ, the Party has already made clear its views on this point. The new revolutionary upsurge seems to be a phenomenon commonly recognised by the Party. Data on this process of maturing, of course, still have to be summarised, but they must form the subject of other articles.

At the present moment it is more important to call the closest attention to the class differences between the old revolution and the new, to weigh up the political situation and our tasks from the point of view of this basic fact, class relations. At the time of the first revolution the vanguard was formed by the workers and soldiers, i.e., by the proletariat and the advanced sections of the peasantry.

This vanguard *carried along* not only many of the worst vacillating elements of the petty bourgeoisie (remember the indecision of the Mensheviks and Trudoviks on the question of a republic), but also the monarchist party of the Cadets, the liberal bourgeoisie, thereby making it a republican party. Why was such a change possible?

Because economic domination is everything to the bourgeoisie, and the form of political domination is of very little importance; the bourgeoisie can rule just as well under a republic, its domination is even more certain under a republic, in the sense that under a republican political order, no changes in the composition of the government or in the composition and the grouping of the ruling parties affect the bourgeoisie.

Of course, the bourgeoisie stood for and will stand for a monarchy, because the cruder armed protection of capital by monarchist institutions is more obvious and "closer" to all the capitalists and landowners. However, under a strong pressure "from below", the bourgeoisie has always and everywhere "reconciled" itself to a republic, as long as it could maintain its economic domination.

The relation of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, i.e., the *majority* of the people, in respect of the bourgeoisie and Allied (and world) imperialism is such that it

is impossible for them to "*carry*" the bourgeoisie *with them*. Moreover, the upper strata of the *petty* bourgeoisie and the more well-to-do strata of the *democratic* petty bourgeoisie are patently against a new revolution. This fact is so obvious that there is no need to dwell on it here. The Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs illustrate this most clearly.

The class relations have changed. This is the crux of the matter.

Different classes now stand "on the one and the other side of the barricade".

That is the main thing.

That, and that *alone*, is the *scientific* reason for speaking of a *new* revolution which—arguing purely theoretically, taking the question in the abstract—could be accomplished legally if, for instance, the Constituent Assembly, convoked by the bourgeoisie, produced a majority opposed to the bourgeoisie, if the majority belonged to the parties of the workers and poor peasants.

The objective relations of the classes, their role (economic and political) outside and inside representative institutions of the given type; the rise or decline of the revolution; the relation of extra-parliamentary to parliamentary means of struggle—these are the chief, the basic objective facts which must be considered if the tactics of boycott or participation are to be deduced in a Marxist way and not arbitrarily, according to our "sympathies".

The experience of our revolution clearly demonstrates how to approach the boycott question in a Marxist way.

Why did the boycott of the Bulygin Duma[33] prove correct tactics?

Because it was in accordance with the objective alignment of social forces in their development. It provided the maturing revolution with a slogan for the overthrow of an old order which, to distract the people from the revolution, was convoking a clumsily fabricated compromise institution (the Bulygin Duma) which did not show promise of any earnest "anchoring" in parliamentarism. The extra-parliamentary means of struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry were stronger. These are the elements that went

into shaping the correct tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma, tactics which took account of the objective situation.

Why did the tactics of boycotting the Third Duma prove incorrect?

Because they were based only on the "catchiness" of the boycott slogan and on the revulsion felt towards the brutal reaction of the June Third "pigsty".[34] The objective situation, however, was such that on the one hand the revolution was in a state of collapse and declining fast. For the upsurge of the revolution a parliamentary base (even inside a "pigsty") was of tremendous political importance, since extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation were almost nonexistent or extremely weak. On the other hand, the most openly reactionary nature of the Third Duma did not prevent it from being an organ reflecting real class relations, namely, the Stolypin[35] combination of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. This new relation of classes was something the country had to get rid of.

These very elements shaped the tactics of participation in the Third Duma that took proper account of the objective situation.

It is sufficient to give thought to these lessons gained from experience and the conditions required by a Marxist approach to the question of boycott or participation, to realise that participation in the Democratic Conference, the Democratic Council or the Pre-parliament would be wrong tactics.

On the one hand, a new revolution is maturing. The war is on the upgrade. The extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation are tremendous. The "parliamentary" tribune in the given Pre-parliament is insignificant. On the other hand, this Pre-parliament neither reflects nor serves a new relation of classes; for instance, the peasantry is here *more poorly* represented than in the already existing organs (Soviets of Peasants' Deputies). The Pre-parliament is in substance a Bonapartist *fraud*, not only because the filthy gang of the Lieberdans, Tseretelis and Chernovs, together with Kerensky and Co. *have given* this Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma a *fake*, hand-picked

composition, but also more profoundly because the only aim of the Pre-parliament is to trick the masses, to deceive the workers and peasants, to distract them from the new upsurge of the revolution, to dazzle the eyes of the oppressed classes by a new dress for the *old*, long tried-out, bedraggled, threadbare "coalition" with the bourgeoisie (i.e., the bourgeoisie's transformation of Tsereteli and Co. into jesters helping to subordinate the people to imperialism and the imperialist war).

"We are weak now," said the tsar in August 1905 to his feudal landowners. "Our power is wavering. The tide of the workers' and peasants' revolution is rising. We must trick the 'plain man', we must dangle something before his eyes...."

"We are weak now," says the present "tsar", the Bonapartist Kerensky, to the Cadets, the non-party Tit Tityches,[36] Plekhanovs, Breshkovskayas and Co. "Our power is tottering. A wave of workers' and peasants' revolution against the bourgeoisie is rising. We must hoodwink the democrats by dying in new colours that jester's costume which the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik 'leaders of revolutionary democracy', our dear friends the Tseretelis and Chernovs, have been wearing to fool the people since May 6, 1917.[37] We can easily dangle a 'Pre-parliament' before their eyes."

"We are strong now," said the tsar to his feudal landowners in June 1907. "The wave of workers' and peasants' revolution is receding, but we cannot maintain ourselves as of old; deception alone will not suffice. We must have a new policy in the village, we must have a new economic and political bloc with the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, with the bourgeoisie."

It is in this way that the three situations, August 1905, September 1917, and June 1907, may be presented to illustrate most vividly the objective basis for the boycott tactics and its connection with class relations. The oppressed classes are always being deceived by the oppressors, but the meaning of this deception differs at different moments in history. Tactics cannot be based on the bare fact that the oppressors deceive the people; tactics must be shaped after analysing class relations *in their entirety* and the

development of both extra-parliamentary and parliamentary struggle.

Participation in the Pre-parliament is *incorrect* tactics that does not correspond to the objective relations of classes, to the objective conditions of the moment.

We should have boycotted the Democratic Conference; we all erred by not doing so, but mistakes are no crime. We shall correct the mistake only if we have a sincere desire to support the revolutionary struggle of the masses, only if we give earnest thought to the objective foundations of our tactics.

We must boycott the Pre-parliament. We must leave it and go to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, to the trade unions, to the masses in general. We must call on *them* to struggle. We must give *them* a correct and clear slogan: disperse the Bonapartist gang of Kerensky and *his* fake Pre-parliament, with this Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, even after the Kornilov revolt, refused to accept our compromise of peacefully transferring the power to the Soviets (in which we *then* had *no* majority); they have again sunk into the morass of filthy and mean bargaining with the Cadets. Down with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries! Struggle against them ruthlessly. Expel them ruthlessly from all revolutionary organisations. No negotiations, no communication with those *friends of the Kishkins*, the friends of the Kornilovite landowners and capitalists.

Saturday, September 23.

Trotsky was for the boycott. Bravo, Comrade Trotsky!

Boycottism was defeated in the Bolshevik group at the Democratic Conference.

Long live the boycott!

We cannot and must not under any circumstances reconcile ourselves to participation. A group at one of the conferences is not the highest organ of the party and even the decisions of the highest organs are subject to revision on the basis of experience.

We must at all costs strive to have the boycott question

solved both at a plenary meeting of the Executive Committee and at an extraordinary Party congress. The boycott question must now be made the platform for elections to the Congress and for *all* elections inside the Party. We must draw the *masses* into the discussion of this question. Class-conscious workers must take the matter into their own hands, organise the discussion, and exert pressure on "those at the *top*".

There is not the slightest doubt that at the "top" of our Party there are noticeable vacillations that may become *ruinous*, because the struggle is developing; under certain conditions, at a certain moment, vacillations may *ruin* the cause. We must put all our forces into the struggle, we must uphold the correct line of the party of the revolutionary proletariat before it is too late.

Not all is well with the "parliamentary" leaders of our Party; greater attention must be paid to them, there must be greater workers' supervision over them; the competency of parliamentary groups must be more clearly defined.

Our Party's mistake is obvious. The fighting party of the advanced class need not fear mistakes. What it should fear is persistence in a mistake, refusal to admit and correct a mistake out of a false sense of shame.

Sunday, September 24.

The Congress of Soviets has been postponed till October 20. The tempo of Russian life is such that this almost means postponing it to the Greek Calends. The farce staged by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks after April 20-21 is being repeated for the second time.

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Published according to a typewritten copy

THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTION

Russia is a country of the petty bourgeoisie, by far the greater part of the population belonging to this class. Its vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are inevitable, and only when it joins the proletariat is the victory of the revolution, of the cause of peace, freedom, and land for the working people assured easily, peacefully, quickly, and smoothly.

The course of our revolution shows us these vacillations in practice. Let us then not harbour any illusions about the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties; let us stick firmly to the path of our proletarian class. The poverty of the poor peasants, the horrors of the war, the horrors of hunger—all these are showing the masses more and more clearly the correctness of the proletarian path, the need to support the proletarian revolution.

The "peaceful" hopes of the petty bourgeoisie that there might be a "coalition" with the bourgeoisie and agreements with them, that it will be possible to wait "calmly" for the "speedy" convocation of the Constituent Assembly, etc., have been mercilessly, cruelly, implacably destroyed by the course of the revolution. The Kornilov revolt was the last cruel lesson, a lesson on a grand scale, supplementing thousands upon thousands of small lessons in which workers and peasants were deceived by local capitalists and landowners, in which soldiers were deceived by the officers, etc., etc.

Discontent, indignation and wrath are growing in the army, among the peasantry and among the workers. The "coalition" of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks

with the bourgeoisie, promising everything and fulfilling nothing, is irritating the masses, is opening their eyes, is pushing them towards insurrection.

There is a growing Left opposition among the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Spiridonova and others) and among the Mensheviks (Martov and others), and has already reached forty per cent of the Council and Congress of those parties. And down *below*, among the proletariat and the peasantry, particularly the poorest sections, the *majority* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks belong to the *Lefts*.

The Kornilov revolt is instructive and has proved a good lesson.

It is impossible to know whether the Soviets will be able to go farther than the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and thus ensure a peaceful development of the revolution, or whether they will continue to mark time, thus making a proletarian uprising inevitable.

We cannot know this.

Our business is to help get everything possible done to make sure the "last" chance for a peaceful development of the revolution, to help by the presentation of our programme, by making clear its national character, its absolute accord with the interests and demands of a vast majority of the population.

The following lines are an essay in the presentation of such a programme.

Let us take it more to those down below, to the masses, to the office employees, to the workers, to the peasants, not only to our supporters, but particularly to those who follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, to the non-party elements, to the ignorant. Let us lift them up so that they can pass an independent judgement, make their own decisions, send *their own* delegations to the Conference, to the Soviets, to the government and our work will not have been in vain, *no matter what* the outcome of the Conference. This will then prove useful for the Conference, for the elections to the Constituent Assembly, and for all other political activity in general.

Experience teaches us that the Bolshevik programme and tactics are correct. So little time passed, so much happened from April 20 to the Kornilov revolt.

The experience of the *masses*, the experience of *oppressed* classes taught them very, very much in that time; the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have completely cut adrift from the masses. This will most certainly be revealed in the discussion of our concrete programme insofar as we are able to bring it to the notice of the masses.

AGREEMENTS WITH THE CAPITALISTS ARE DISASTROUS

1. To leave in power the representatives of the bourgeoisie, even a small number of them, to leave in power such notorious Kornilovites as Generals Alexeyev, Klembovsky, Bagration, Gagarin, and others, or such as have proved their complete powerlessness in face of the bourgeoisie, and their ability of acting Bonaparte-fashion like Kerensky, is, on the one hand, merely opening the door wide to famine and the inevitable economic catastrophe which the capitalists are purposely accelerating and intensifying; on the other hand, it will lead to a military catastrophe, since the army hates the General Staff and cannot enthusiastically participate in the imperialist war. Besides, there is no doubt that Kornilovite generals and officers remaining in power will *deliberately open the front to the Germans*, as they have done in Galicia and Riga. This can be prevented only by the formation of a new government on a new basis, as expounded below. To continue any kind of agreements with the bourgeoisie after all that we have gone through since April 20 would be, on the part of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not only an error but a direct betrayal of the people and of the revolution.

POWER TO THE SOVIETS

2. All power in the country must pass exclusively to the representatives of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies on the basis of a definite programme and under the condition of the government being fully responsible to the Soviets. New elections to the Soviets must be held immediately, both to record the experience of the people during the recent weeks of the revolution, which have

been particularly eventful, and to eliminate crying injustices (lack of proportional representation, unequal elections, etc.) which in some cases still remain.

All power locally, wherever there are not yet any democratically elected institutions, and also in the army, must be taken over exclusively by the local Soviets and by commissars and other institutions elected by them, but only those that have been properly elected.

Workers and revolutionary troops, i.e., those who have in practice shown their ability to suppress the Kornilovites, must everywhere be armed, and this must be done with the full support of the state.

PEACE TO THE PEOPLES

3. The Soviet Government must *straight away* offer to all the belligerent peoples (i.e., simultaneously both to their governments and to the worker and peasant masses) to conclude an immediate general peace on democratic terms, and also to conclude an immediate armistice (even if only for three months).

The main condition for a democratic peace is the renunciation of annexations (seizures)—not in the incorrect sense that all powers get back what they have lost, but in the only correct sense that *every* nationality without any exception, both in Europe and in the colonies, shall obtain its freedom and the possibility to decide for itself whether it is to form a *separate* state or whether it is to enter into the composition of some other state.

In offering the peace terms, the Soviet Government must itself immediately take steps towards their fulfilment, i.e., it must publish and repudiate the secret treaties by which we have been bound up to the present time, those which were concluded by the tsar and which give Russian capitalists the promise of the pillaging of Turkey, Austria, etc. Then we must immediately satisfy the demands of the Ukrainians and the Finns, ensure them, as well as all other non-Russian nationalities in Russia, full freedom, including freedom of secession, applying the same *to all* Armenia, undertaking to evacuate that country as well as the Turkish lands occupied by us, etc.

Such peace terms will not meet with the approval of the capitalists, but they will meet with such tremendous sympathy on the part of all the peoples and will cause such a great world-wide outburst of enthusiasm and of general indignation against the continuation of the predatory war that it is extremely probable that we shall at once obtain a truce and a consent to open peace negotiations. For the workers' revolution against the war is irresistibly growing everywhere, and it can be spurred on, not by phrases about peace (with which the workers and peasants have been deceived by *all* the imperialist governments including our own Kerensky government), but by a break with the capitalists and by the offer of peace.

If the least probable thing happens, i.e., if not a single belligerent state accepts even a truce, then as far as we are concerned the war becomes truly forced upon us, it becomes a truly just war of defence. If this is understood by the proletariat and the poor peasantry Russia will become many times stronger even in the military sense, especially after a complete break with the capitalists who are robbing the people; furthermore, under such conditions it would, as far as we are concerned, be a war in league with the oppressed classes of all countries, a war in league with the oppressed peoples of the whole world, not in word, but in deed.

The people must be particularly cautioned against the capitalists' assertion which sometimes influences the petty bourgeoisie and others who are frightened, namely, that the British and other capitalists are capable of doing serious damage to the Russian revolution if we break the present predatory alliance with them. Such an assertion is false through and through, for "Allied financial aid" enriches the bankers and "supports" the Russian workers and peasants in exactly the same way as a rope supports a man who has been hanged. There is plenty of bread, coal, oil and iron in Russia; for these products to be properly distributed it is only necessary for us to rid ourselves of the landowners and capitalists who are robbing the people. As to the possibility of the Russian people being threatened with war by their present Allies, it is obviously absurd to assume that the French and Italians could unite their

armies with those of the Germans and move them against Russia who offers a just peace. As to Britain, America, and Japan, even if they were to declare war against Russia (which for them is extremely difficult, both because of the extreme unpopularity of such a war among the masses and because of the divergence of material interests of the capitalists of those countries over the partitioning of Asia, especially over the plunder of China), they could not cause Russia one-hundredth part of the damage and misery which the war with Germany, Austria, and Turkey is causing her.

LAND TO THOSE WHO TILL IT

4. The Soviet Government must immediately declare the abolition of private landed estates without compensation and place all these estates under the management of the peasant committees pending the solution of the problem by the Constituent Assembly. These peasant committees are also to take over all the landowners' stock and implements, with the proviso that they be placed primarily at the disposal of the poor peasants for their use free of charge.

Such measures, which have long been demanded by an immense majority of the peasantry, both in the resolutions of congresses and in hundreds of mandates from local peasants (as may be seen, for instance, from a summary of 242 mandates published by *Izvestia Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov*[38]), are absolutely and urgently necessary. There must be no further procrastination like that from which the peasantry suffered so much at the time of the "coalition" government.

Any government that hesitates to introduce these measures should be regarded as a government *hostile to the people* that should be overthrown and crushed by an uprising of the workers and peasants. On the other hand, only a govern ent that realises these measures will be a government of all the people.

STRUGGLE AGAINST FAMINE AND ECONOMIC RUIN

5. The Soviet Government must immediately introduce workers' control of production and distribution on a nation-wide scale. Experience since May 6 has shown that

in the absence of such control all the promises of reforms and attempts to introduce them are powerless, and famine, accompanied by unprecedented catastrophe is becoming a greater menace to the whole country week by week.

It is necessary to nationalise the banks and the insurance business immediately, and also the most important branches of industry (oil, coal, metallurgy, sugar, etc.), and at the same time, to abolish commercial secrets and to establish unrelaxing supervision by the workers and peasants over the negligible minority of capitalists who wax rich on government contracts and evade accounting and just taxation of their profits and property.

Such measures, which do not deprive either the middle peasants, the Cossacks or the small handicraftsmen of a single kopek, are urgently needed for the struggle against famine and are absolutely just because they distribute the burdens of the war equitably. Only after capitalist plunder has been curbed and the deliberate sabotage of production has been stopped will it be possible to work for an improvement in labour productivity, introduce universal labour conscription and the proper exchange of grain for manufactured goods, and return to the Treasury thousands of millions in paper money now being hoarded by the rich.

Without such measures, the abolition of the landed estates without compensation is also impossible, for the major part of the estates is mortgaged to the banks, so that the interests of the landowners and capitalists are inseparably linked up.

The latest resolution of the Economic Department of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (*Rabochaya Gazeta* No. 152) recognises not only the "*harm*" caused by the government's measures (like the raising of grain prices for the enrichment of the landowners and kulaks), not only "the fact of the *complete inactivity* on the part of the central organs set up by the government for the regulation of economic life", but even the "*contravention of the laws*" by this government. This admission on the part of the ruling parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, proves once more the criminal nature of the policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie.

STRUGGLE AGAINST THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION OF THE LANDOWNERS AND CAPITALISTS

6. The Kornilov and Kaledin revolt was supported by the entire class of the landowners and capitalists, with the party of the Cadets ("people's freedom" party) at their head. This has already been fully proved by the facts published in *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee.

However, nothing has been done either to suppress this counter-revolution completely or even to investigate it, and nothing serious can be done without the transfer of power to the Soviets. No commission can conduct a full investigation, or arrest the guilty, etc., unless it holds state power. Only a Soviet government can do this, and must do it. Only a Soviet government can make Russia secure against the otherwise inevitable repetition of "Kornilov" attempts by arresting the Kornilovite generals and the ringleaders of the bourgeois counter-revolution (Guchkov, Milyukov, Ryabushinsky, Maklakov and Co.), by disbanding the counter-revolutionary associations (the State Duma, the officers' unions, etc.), by placing their members under the surveillance of the local Soviets and by disbanding counter-revolutionary armed units.

This government alone can set up a commission to make a full and public investigation of the Kornilov case and all the other cases, even those started by the bourgeoisie; and the party of the Bolsheviks, in its turn, would appeal to the workers to give full co-operation and to submit only to such a commission.

Only a Soviet government could successfully combat such a flagrant injustice as the capitalists' seizure of the largest printing presses and most of the papers with the aid of millions squeezed out of the people. It is necessary to suppress the bourgeois counter-revolutionary papers (*Rech*, *Russkoye Slovo*,[39] etc.), to confiscate their printing presses, to declare private advertisements in the papers a state monopoly, to transfer them to the paper published by the Soviets, the paper that tells the peasants the truth. Only in this way can and must the bourgeoisie be deprived of its powerful weapon of lying and slandering, deceiving the people with impunity, misleading the peasantry, and preparing a counter-revolution.

PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTION

7. A possibility very seldom to be met with in the history of revolutions now faces the democracy of Russia, the Soviets and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties—the possibility of convening the Constituent Assembly at the appointed date without further delays, of making the country secure against a military and economic catastrophe, and of ensuring the peaceful development of the revolution.

If the Soviets now take full state power exclusively into their own hands for the purpose of carrying out the programme set forth above, they will not only obtain the support of nine-tenths of the population of Russia, the working class and an overwhelming majority of the peasantry; they will also be assured of the greatest revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the army and the majority of the people, an enthusiasm without which victory over famine and war is impossible.

There could be no question of any resistance to the Soviets if the Soviets themselves did not waver. No class will dare start an uprising against the Soviets, and the landowners and capitalists, taught a lesson by the experience of the Kornilov revolt, will give up their power peacefully and yield to the ultimatum of the Soviets. To overcome the capitalists' resistance to the programme of the Soviets, supervision over the exploiters by workers and peasants and such measures of punishing the recalcitrants as confiscation of their entire property coupled with a short term of arrest will be sufficient.

By seizing full power, the Soviets could still today—and this is probably their last chance—ensure the peaceful development of the revolution, peaceful elections of deputies by the people, and a peaceful struggle of parties inside the Soviets; they could test the programmes of the various parties in practice and power could pass peacefully from one party to another.

The entire course of development of the revolution, from the movement of April 20 to the Kornilov revolt, shows that there is bound to be the bitterest civil war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat if this opportunity is

missed. Inevitable catastrophe will bring this war nearer. It must end, as all data and considerations accessible to human reason go to prove, in the full victory of the working class, in that class, supported by the poor peasantry, carrying out the above programme; it may, however, prove very difficult and bloody, and may cost the lives of tens of thousands of landowners, capitalists, and officers who sympathise with them. The proletariat will not hesitate to make every sacrifice to save the revolution, which is possible only by implementing the programme set forth above. On the other hand, the proletariat would support the Soviets in every way if they were to make use of their last chance to secure a peaceful development of the revolution.

Rabochy Put Nos. 20-21,
October 9 and 10
(September 26 and 27), 1917
Signed: N. K.

Published according
to the newspaper text

LETTER TO I. T. SMILGA, CHAIRMAN OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE ARMY, NAVY AND WORKERS OF FINLAND

Comrade Smilga,

I am taking advantage of a favourable opportunity to talk with you in greater detail.

1

The general political situation causes me great anxiety. The Petrograd Soviet and the Bolsheviks have declared war on the government. But the government has an army, and is preparing *systematically*. (Kerensky at General Headquarters is obviously entering into an understanding—a *business-like* understanding with the Kornilovites to use troops to put down the Bolsheviks.)

And what are we doing? We are only passing resolutions. We are losing time. We set "dates" (October 20, the Congress of Soviets—is it not ridiculous to put it off so long? Is it not ridiculous to rely on that?). The Bolsheviks are *not* conducting regular work to prepare their *own* military forces for the overthrow of Kerensky.

Events have fully proved the correctness of the proposal I made at the time of the Democratic Conference, namely, that the Party *must* put the armed uprising on the order of the day.* Events *compel* us to do this. History has made the *military* question now the fundamental *political* question. I am afraid that the Bolsheviks forget this, being busy

* See pp. 19-21 of this volume.—*Ed.*

with "day-to-day events", petty current questions, and "*hoping*" that "the wave will sweep Kerensky away". Such hope is naïve; it is the same as relying on chance, and may prove criminal on the part of the party of the revolutionary proletariat.

It is my opinion that inside the Party we must agitate for an earnest attitude towards the armed uprising, for which reason this letter should be typed and delivered to the Petrograd and Moscow comrades.

2

Now about your role. It seems to me we can have *completely* at our disposal only the troops in Finland and the Baltic fleet and only they can play a *serious* military role. I think you must make most of your high position, shift all the petty routine work to assistants and secretaries and not waste time on "resolutions"; give *all your attention* to the *military* preparation of the troops in Finland plus the fleet for the impending overthrow of Kerensky. Create a *secret* committee of absolutely *trustworthy* military men, discuss matters *thoroughly* with them, collect (and *personally* verify) the most precise data on the composition and the location of troops near and in Petrograd, the transfer of the troops from Finland to Petrograd, the movement of the fleet, etc.

If we fail to do this, we may turn out to be consummate idiots, the owners of beautiful resolutions and of Soviets, but *no power*! I think it is possible for you to select really reliable and competent military men, to make a trip to Ino[40] and other most important points, to weigh and study the matter *earnestly*, not relying on the boastful general phrases *all too common* with us.

It is obvious that we can *under no circumstances* allow the troops to be moved from Finland. Better *do anything*, better decide on an uprising, on the seizure of power, later to be transferred to the Congress of Soviets. I read in the papers today that in two weeks the danger of a landing will be nil. Obviously, you have very little time left for preparation.

3

To continue. We must utilise our "power" in Finland to conduct systematic propaganda among the Cossacks now stationed in Finland. From Vyborg, for instance, Kerensky and Co. purposely removed some of them, fearing Bolshevisation", and stationed them in Uusikirkko and Perkjärvi, between Vyborg and Terijoki, in Bolshevik-proof isolation. We must study all the information about the location of the Cossacks, and must organise the dispatch of *propaganda groups* to them from among the best forces of the sailors and soldiers in Finland. This is imperative. Do the same thing about literature.

4

To continue. Of course, both sailors and soldiers go home on furloughs. Out of these men we must form groups of propagandists to travel over the provinces systematically and to carry on both general propaganda and propaganda in favour of the Constituent Assembly in the villages. Your situation is exceptionally good because you are in a position to *begin* immediately to form that bloc with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries which alone can give us stable power in Russia and a majority in the Constituent Assembly. While things are being settled, organise such a *bloc* immediately in your place, organise the publication of leaflets (find out what you can do about them technically as well as in the matter of transporting them into Russia). Then each propaganda group for work in the rural areas should consist of not less than *two* persons—one from the Bolsheviks and one from the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. The Socialist-Revolutionary "trade mark" is still popular among village folk and you must make the most of your good fortune (you have some Left Socialist-Revolutionaries) to effect a bloc of the Bolsheviks and *Left* Socialist-Revolutionaries under this "trade mark" in the countryside, a bloc of peasants and workers and not of peasants and capitalists.

5

It seems to me that in order to prepare people's minds properly we must immediately circulate the following slogan: transfer power now to the Petrograd Soviet *which will transfer it* to the Congress of Soviets. Why should we tolerate three more weeks of war and Kerensky's "Kornilovite preparations"?

Propaganda in favour of this slogan by the Bolsheviks and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in Finland can do nothing but good.

6

Since you are vested with "power" in Finland, you have to do one more very important, though in itself modest job—organise the illegal transport of literature *from* Sweden. Without this all talk of an "International" is an empty *phrase*. This can be done, first, by creating our own organisation *of soldiers* at the frontier; secondly, if this is impossible, by organising *regular trips* of at least *one* reliable man to a certain place where I began to organise the transport with the aid of *the person in whose house I lived for one day* before moving to Helsingfors (Rovio knows him).[41] Perhaps we must help with some money. Get this done by all means!

7

I think we should meet to talk all these things over. You could come here; it would take you less than a day; if you come *only* to see me, have Rovio phone Huttunen and ask him whether Rovio's "sister-in-law" (meaning you) may see Huttunen's "sister" (meaning myself). I may have to leave suddenly.

Do not fail to acknowledge the receipt of this letter (*burn it*) through the comrade who will bring it to Rovio and *who will soon go back*.

In case I stay here longer, we must organise postal connections. *You could help* by sending envelopes through railway workers to the Vyborg *Soviet* (inside envelope: "for Huttunen").

8

Send me by the same comrade identification papers (as formal as possible, either typewritten, or *in very clear handwriting* on the stationery of the Regional Committee, stamped and with the signature of the chairman), in the name of Konstantin Petrovich Ivanov, to the effect that the chairman of the Regional Committee vouches for comrade so-and-so, and requests *all Soviets*, the **Vyborg** Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies as well as others, to give him *full* confidence, aid and support.

I need it in *case* of some emergency, since a "conflict" and a "meeting" are equally possible.

9

Have you a copy of the Moscow collection of articles *On the Revision of the Programme*?[42] Try to find one among the comrades in Helsingfors and send it to me by the same comrade.

10

Bear in mind that Rovio is a fine fellow, but *lazy*. He must be looked after and *reminded* of things twice a day. Otherwise he won't do them.

Greetings. *K. Ivanov*

Written on September 27
(October 10), 1917

First published in *Pravda*
No. 255, November 7, 1925

Published according
to the manuscript

THE CRISIS HAS MATURED[43]

I

The end of September undoubtedly marked a great turning-point in the history of the Russian revolution and, to all appearances, of the world revolution as well.

The world working-class revolution began with the action of individuals, whose boundless courage represented everything honest that remained of that decayed official "socialism" which is in reality social-chauvinism. Liebknecht in Germany, Adler in Austria, MacLean in Britain—these are the best-known names of the isolated heroes who have taken upon themselves the arduous role of forerunners of the world revolution.

The second stage in the historical preparation for this revolution was a widespread mass discontent, expressing itself in the split of the official parties, in illegal publications and in street demonstrations. The protest against the war became stronger, and the number of victims of government persecution increased. The prisons of countries famed for their observance of law and even for their freedom—Germany, France, Italy and Britain—became filled with tens and hundreds of internationalists, opponents of the war and advocates of a working-class revolution.

The third stage has now begun. This stage may be called the eve of revolution. Mass arrests of party leaders in free Italy, and particularly the beginning of *mutinies* in the German army,[44] are indisputable symptoms that a great turning-point is at hand, that we are *on the eve of a world-wide revolution*.

Российская Соціалъ-Демократическая Рабочая Партія.

Цѣна 20 коп. на мѣс. дор. 25 коп.

Пролетаріи всѣхъ странъ, соединяйтесь!

Центральный органъ Р. С.-Д. Р. П.

РАБОЧІЙ ПУТЬ.

№ 30. Суббота ЕЖЕДНЕВНАЯ ГАЗЕТА. 20-го Октября (7-го октября ст. ст.) 1917 г.

Товарищи рабочіе, солдаты и крестьяне! Готовьтесь къ Всероссійскому Съѣзду Совѣтовъ на 20-ое октября! Немедленно созывайте Областные Съѣзды Совѣтовъ!

Сегодня въ номерѣ.

Кризисъ назрѣлъ.

Отклики.

First page of the newspaper Rabochy Put No. 30, October 20 (7), 1917, in which Lenin's article "The Crisis Has Matured" was published

Reduced

First page of the newspaper Rabochy Put No. 30, October 20 (7), 1917, in which Lenin's article "The Crisis Has Matured" was published

Reduced

Even before this there were, no doubt, individual cases of mutiny among the troops in Germany, but they were so small, so weak and isolated that it was possible to hush them up—and that was the chief way of checking the *mass contagion* of seditious action. Finally, there developed such a movement in the navy that it was *impossible* to hush it up, despite all the severity of the German regime of military servitude, severity elaborated with amazing minuteness of detail and observed with incredible pedantry.

Doubt is out of the question. We are on the threshold of a world proletarian revolution. And since of all the proletarian internationalists in all countries only we Russian Bolsheviks enjoy a measure of freedom—we have a legal party and a score or so of papers, we have the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals on our side, and we have the support of a *majority* of the people in a time of revolution—to us the saying, "To whom much has been given, of him much shall be required" in all justice can and must be applied.

II

The crucial point of the revolution in Russia has undoubtedly arrived.

In a peasant country, and under a revolutionary, republican government which enjoys the support of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties that only yesterday dominated petty-bourgeois democracy, a *peasant revolt* is developing.

Incredible as this is, it is a fact.

We Bolsheviks are not surprised by this fact. We have always said that the government of the notorious "coalition" with the bourgeoisie is a government that *betrays* democracy and the revolution, that it is a government of *imperialist* slaughter, a government that *protects* the capitalists and landowners *from* the people.

Owing to the deception practised by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, there still exists in Russia, under a republic and in a time of revolution, a government of capitalists and landowners side by side with the Soviets. This is the bitter and sinister reality. Is it then surprising,

in view of the incredible hardship inflicted on the people by prolonging the imperialist war and by its consequences, that a peasant revolt has begun and is spreading in Russia?

Is it then surprising that the enemies of the Bolsheviks, the leaders of the *official* Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the very party that supported the "coalition" all along, the party that until the last few days or weeks had the majority of the people on its side, the party that continues to harry and abuse the "new" Socialist-Revolutionaries, who have realised that the policy of coalition is a betrayal of the interests of the peasants—is it surprising that these leaders of the official Socialist-Revolutionary Party wrote the following in an editorial in their official organ, *Dyelo Naroda* of September 29:

> "So far practically nothing has been done to put an end to the relations of bondage that still prevail in the villages of central Russia.... The bill for the regulation of land relations in the countryside, which was introduced in the Provisional Government long ago, and which has even passed through such a purgatory as the Judicial Conference, has got hopelessly stuck in some office.... Are we not right in asserting that our republican government is still a long way from having rid itself of the old habits of the tsarist administration, and that the dead hand of Stolypin is still making itself strongly felt in the methods of the revolutionary ministers?"

This is written by the official Socialist-Revolutionaries! Just think: the supporters of the coalition are *forced* to admit that in a peasant country, after seven months of revolution, "practically nothing has been done to put an end to the bondage" of the peasants, to their enslavement by the landowners! These Socialist-Revolutionaries are *forced* to give the name of *Stolypins* to their colleague, Kerensky, and his gang of ministers.

Could we get more eloquent testimony than this from the camp of our opponents, not only to the effect that the coalition has collapsed and that the official Socialist-Revolutionaries who tolerate Kerensky have become an *anti-popular*, *anti-peasant and counter-revolutionary party*, but also that the whole Russian revolution has reached a turning-point?

A peasant revolt in a peasant country against the govern-

ment of the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky, the Mensheviks Nikitin and Gvozdyov, and other ministers who represent capital and the interests of the landowners! The crushing of this revolt by *military measures* by a republican government!

In the face of such facts, can one remain a conscientious champion of the proletariat and yet deny that a crisis has matured, that the revolution is passing through an extremely critical moment, that the government's victory over the peasant revolt would now sound the death knell of the revolution, would be the final triumph of the Kornilov revolt?

III

It is obvious that if in a peasant country, after seven months of a democratic republic, matters could come to a peasant revolt, it irrefutably proves that the revolution is suffering nation-wide collapse, that it is experiencing a crisis of unprecedented severity, and that the forces of counter-revolution have gone the *limit*.

That is obvious. In the face of such a fact as a peasant revolt all other political symptoms, even were they to contradict the fact that a nation-wide crisis is maturing, would have no significance whatsoever.

But on the contrary, all the symptoms do indicate that a nation-wide crisis has matured.

Next to the agrarian question, the most important question in Russia's state affairs is the national question, particularly for the petty-bourgeois masses of the population. And at the "Democratic" Conference, which was fixed by Mr. Tsereteli and Co., we find that the "national" curia takes second place for radicalism, yielding only to the trade unions, and *exceeding* the curia of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in the percentage of votes cast *against* the coalition (40 out of 55). The Kerensky government—a government suppressing the peasant revolt—is withdrawing the revolutionary troops from Finland in order to strengthen the reactionary Finnish bourgeoisie. In the Ukraine, the conflicts of the Ukrainians in general, and of the Ukrainian troops in particular, with the government are becoming more and more frequent.

Furthermore, let us take the army, which in war-time plays an exceptionally big role in all state affairs. We find that the army in Finland and the fleet in the Baltic have completely *parted ways* with the government. We have the testimony of the officer Dubasov, a non-Bolshevik, who speaks in the name of the whole front and declares in a manner more revolutionary than that of any Bolsheviks that the soldiers will not fight any longer.[45] We have governmental reports stating that the soldiers are in a state of "agitation" and that it is impossible to guarantee the maintenance of "order" (i.e., participation of these troops in the suppression of the peasant revolt). We have, finally, the voting in Moscow, where fourteen thousand out of seventeen thousand soldiers voted for the Bolsheviks.

This vote in the elections to the district councils in Moscow is in general one of the most striking symptoms of the profound change which has taken place in the mood of the whole nation. It is generally known that Moscow is more petty-bourgeois than Petrograd. It is a fact frequently corroborated and indisputable that the Moscow proletariat has an incomparably greater number of connections with the countryside, that it has greater sympathy for the peasant and is closer to the sentiments of the peasant.

In Moscow the vote cast for the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks nevertheless dropped from 70 per cent in June to 18 per cent. There can be no doubt that the petty bourgeoisie and the people have turned away from the coalition. The Cadets have increased their strength from 17 to 30 per cent, but they remain a minority, a hopeless minority, despite the fact that they have obviously been joined by the "Right" Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the "Right" Mensheviks. *Russkiye Vedomosti*[46] states that the *absolute* number of votes cast for the Cadets fell from *67,000* to *62,000*. Only the votes cast for the Bolsheviks increased—from 34,000 to 82,000. They received 47 per cent of the total vote. There can be no shadow of doubt that we, together with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, now have a majority in the Soviets, in the army, and *in the country*.

Among the symptoms that have not only a symptomatic, but also a very real significance is the fact that the armies

of railway and postal employees, who are of immense importance from the general economic, political and military point of view, continue to be in sharp conflict with the government,[47] even the Menshevik defencists are dissatisfied with "their" Minister, Nikitin, and the official Socialist-Revolutionaries call Kerensky and Co. "Stolypins". Is it not clear that if such "support" of the government by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries has any value at all it can be only a negative value?

IV

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V

Yes, the leaders of the Central Executive Committee are pursuing the correct tactics of defending the bourgeoisie and the landowners. And there is not the slightest doubt that if the Bolsheviks allowed themselves to be caught in the trap of constitutional illusions, "faith" in the Congress of Soviets and in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, "waiting" for the Congress of Soviets, and so forth—these Bolsheviks would most certainly be *miserable traitors* to the proletarian cause.

They would be traitors to the cause, for by their conduct they would be betraying the German revolutionary workers who have started a revolt in the navy. To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets and so forth under such circumstances would be a *betrayal of internationalism*, a betrayal of the cause of the world socialist revolution.

For internationalism consists of *deeds* and not phrases, not expressions of solidarity, not resolutions.

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to the *peasants*, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt by a government which *even Dyelo Naroda* compares with the Stolypin government would be *to ruin* the whole revolution, to ruin it for good. An outcry is raised about anarchy and about the increasing indifference of the people, but what else can the people be but indifferent to the elections, when the peasants have been *driven to revolt* while the so-called

"revolutionary democrats" are patiently tolerating its suppression by military force!

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to democracy and to freedom, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt at such a moment would *mean* allowing the elections to the Constituent Assembly to be fixed *in exactly the same way* as the Democratic Conference and the "Pre-parliament" were fixed, only even worse and more crudely.

The crisis has matured. The whole future of the Russian revolution is at stake. The honour of the Bolshevik Party is in question. The whole future of the international workers' revolution for socialism is at stake.

The crisis has matured....

September 29, 1917.

Everything to this point may be published, but what follows is *to be distributed* among the members of the *Central Committee*, *the Petrograd Committee*, *the Moscow Committee*, *and the Soviets*.

VI

What, then, is to be done? We must *aussprechen was ist*, "state the facts", admit the truth that there is a tendency, or an opinion, in our Central Committee and among the leaders of our Party which favours *waiting* for the Congress of Soviets, and is *opposed* to taking power immediately, is *opposed* to an immediate insurrection. That tendency, or opinion, must be *overcome*.[48]

Otherwise, the Bolsheviks will cover themselves with eternal *shame* and *destroy themselves* as a party.

For to miss such a moment and to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets would be *utter idiocy*, or *sheer treachery*.

It would be sheer treachery to the German workers. Surely we should not wait until their revolution *begins*. In that case even the Lieberdans would be in favour of "supporting" it. But it *cannot* begin as long as Kerensky, Kishkin and Co. are in power.

It would be sheer treachery to the peasants. To allow the peasant revolt to be suppressed when we control the Soviets

of both *capitals* would be to *lose*, and *justly lose*, every ounce of the peasants' confidence. In the eyes of the peasants we would be putting ourselves on a level with the Lieberdans and other scoundrels.

To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets would be utter idiocy, for it would mean losing *weeks* at a time when weeks and even days decide *everything*. It would mean faint-heartedly *renouncing* power, for on November 1-2 it will have become impossible to take power (both politically and technically, since the Cossacks would be mobilised for the day of the insurrection so foolishly "appointed"*).

To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets is idiocy, for the Congress will *give nothing*, *and can give nothing*!

"Moral" importance? Strange indeed, to talk of the "importance" of resolutions and conversations with the Lieberdans when we know that the Soviets *support* the peasants and that the peasant revolt is *being suppressed*! We would be reducing the *Soviets* to the status of wretched debating parlours. First defeat Kerensky, then call the Congress.

The Bolsheviks are now *guaranteed* the success of the insurrection: (1) we can** (if we do not "wait" for the Soviet Congress) launch a *surprise* attack from three points—from Petrograd, from Moscow and from the Baltic fleet; (2) we have slogans that guarantee us support—down with the government that is suppressing the revolt of the peasants against the landowners! (3) we have a majority *in the country*; (4) the disorganisation among the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries is complete; (5) we are technically in a position to take power in Moscow (where the start might even be made, so as to catch the enemy unawares); (6) we have *thousands* of armed workers and soldiers in Petrograd who could *at once* seize the Winter Palace, the General Staff building, the telephone exchange

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* To "convene" the Congress of Soviets for October 20 in order to decide upon "taking power"—how does that differ from foolishly "appointing" an insurrection? It is possible to take power now, whereas on October 20-29 you will not be given a chance to.

** What has the Party done to *study* the disposition of the troops, etc? What has it done to conduct the insurrection as an art? Mere talk in the Central Executive Committee, and so on!

and the large printing presses. Nothing will be able to drive us out, while agitational work in the *army* will be such as to make it *impossible* to combat this government of peace, of land for the peasants, and so forth.

If we were to attack at once, suddenly, from three points, Petrograd, Moscow and the Baltic fleet, the chances are a hundred to one that we would succeed with smaller sacrifices than on July 3-5, because *the troops will not advance* against a government of peace. Even though Kerensky *already* has "loyal" cavalry, etc., in Petrograd, if we were to attack from two sides, he would be compelled to *surrender* since *we* enjoy the sympathy of the army. If with such chances as we have at present we do not take power, then all talk of transferring the power to the Soviets becomes *a lie*.

To refrain from taking power now, to "wait", to indulge in talk in the Central Executive Committee, to confine ourselves to "fighting for the organ" (of the Soviet), "fighting for the Congress", is *to doom the revolution to failure*.

In view of the fact that the Central Committee has *even left unanswered* the persistent demands I have been making for such a policy ever since the beginning of the Democratic Conference, in view of the fact that the Central Organ is *deleting* from my articles all references to such glaring errors on the part of the Bolsheviks as the shameful decision to participate in the Pre-parliament, the admission of Mensheviks to the Presidium of the Soviet, etc., etc.—I am compelled to regard this as a "subtle" hint at the unwillingness of the Central Committee even to consider this question, a subtle hint that I should keep my mouth shut, and as a proposal for me to retire.

I am compelled to *tender my resignation from the Central Committee*, which I hereby do, reserving for myself freedom to campaign among the *rank and file* of the Party and at the Party Congress.

For it is my profound conviction that if we "wait" for the Congress of Soviets and let the present moment pass, we shall *ruin* the revolution.

September 29. *N. Lenin*

P.S. There are a number of facts which serve to prove that *even* the Cossack troops will not go against a government of peace! And how many are there? Where are they? And will not the entire army dispatch units *for our support*?

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CAN THE BOLSHEVIKS RETAIN STATE POWER?[49]

Written at the end of September-October 1 (14), 1917

Published in October 1917 in the magazine *Prosveshcheniye* No. 1-2

Published according to the magazine text

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FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

The present pamphlet, as is evident from the text, was written at the end of September and was finished on October 1, 1917.

The October 25 Revolution has transferred the question raised in this pamphlet from the sphere of theory to the sphere of practice.

This question must now be answered by deeds, not words. The theoretical arguments advanced against the Bolsheviks taking power were feeble in the extreme. These arguments have been shot to pieces.

The task now is for the advanced class—the proletariat—to prove *in practice* the viability of the workers' and peasants' government. All class-conscious workers, all the active and honest peasants, all working and exploited people, will do everything they can to solve the immense historic question in practice.

To work, everybody to work, the cause of the world socialist revolution must and will triumph.

St. Petersburg, November 9, 1917.

N. Lenin

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On what are all trends agreed, from *Rech* to *Novaya Zhizn*[50] inclusively, from the Kornilovite Cadets to the semi-Bolsheviks, *all*, except the Bolsheviks?

They all agree that the Bolsheviks will either never dare take over full state power alone, or, if they do dare, and do take power, they will not be able to retain it even for the shortest while.

If anybody asserts that the question of the Bolsheviks alone taking over full state power is a totally unfeasible political question, that only a swelled-headed "fanatic" of the worst kind can regard it as feasible, we refute this assertion by quoting the exact statements of the most responsible and most influential political parties and trends of various "hues".

But let me begin with a word or two about the first of the questions mentioned—will the Bolsheviks dare take over full state power alone? I have already had occasion, at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, to answer this question in the affirmative in no uncertain manner by a remark that I shouted from my seat during one of Tsereteli's[51] ministerial speeches. And I have not met in the press, or heard, any statements by Bolsheviks to the effect that we ought not to take power alone. I still maintain that a political party—and the party of the advanced class in particular—would have no right to exist, would be unworthy of the name of party, would be a nonentity in any sense, if it refused to take power when opportunity offers.

We shall now quote statements by the Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and semi-Bolsheviks (I would prefer

to say quarter-Bolsheviks) on the question that interests us.

The leading article in *Rech* of September 16:

"Discord and confusion reigned in the Alexandrinsky Theatre, and the socialist press reflects the same picture. Only the views of the Bolsheviks are definite and straightforward At the Conference, they are the views of the minority. In the Soviets, they represent a constantly growing trend. But In spite of all their verbal pugnacity, their boastful phrases and display of self-confidence, the Bolsheviks, except for a few fanatics, are brave only in words. They would not attempt to take 'full power' on their own accord. Disorganisers and disrupters *par excellence*, they are really cowards who in their heart of hearts are fully aware of both their own intrinsic ignorance and the ephemeral nature of their present successes. They know as well as we all do that the first day of their ultimate triumph would also be the first day of their precipitous fall. Irresponsible by their very nature, anarchists in method and practice, they should be regarded only as a trend of political thought, or rather, as one of its aberrations. The best way to get rid of Bolshevism for many a year, to banish it, would be to place the country's fate in the hands of its leaders. And if it were not for the awareness that experiments of this kind are impermissible and fatal, one might in desperation decide on even this heroic measure. Happily, we repeat, these dismal heroes of the day are not by any means actually out to seize full power. Not under any circumstances are they capable of constructive work. Thus, all their definite and straight-forward views are confined to the political rostrum, to soapbox oratory. For practical purposes their position cannot be taken into consideration from any point of view. In one respect, however, it has some practical consequence: it unites all other shades of 'socialist thought' opposed to it...."

This is the way the Cadets reason. Here, however, is the view of the biggest, "ruling and governing", party in Russia, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, also expressed in an unsigned, i.e., editorial, leading article in their official organ *Dyelo Naroda* of September 21:

..."If the bourgeoisie refuse, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, to work with the democracy on the basis of the platform that was endorsed by the Conference, then the *coalition must arise from within the Conference itself*. This would be a serious sacrifice on the part of the supporters of the coalition, *but even those campaigning for the idea of a 'pure line' of power will have to agree to it*. We are afraid, however, that agreement may not be reached here. In that case a third and final combination remains, namely: the government *must* be organised by that half of the Conference which on *principle* advocated the idea of a homogeneous government.

"Let us put it definitely: *the Bolsheviks will be obliged to form a Cabinet*. With the greatest energy, they imbued the revolutionary demo-

crats with hatred of the coalition, promising them all sorts of benefits as soon as 'compromise' was abandoned, and attributing to the latter all the country's misfortunes.

"If they were aware of what they were doing by their *agitation*, if they were *not deceiving the people*, *it is their duty* to redeem the promissory notes they have been handing out right and left.

"The question is clear.

"Let them not make futile attempts to hide behind hastily concocted theory that it is impossible for them to take power.

"The democracy will not accept these theories.

"At the same time, the advocates of coalition must guarantee them full support. These are the three combinations, the three ways, open to us—there are no others!" (The italics are those of *Dyelo Naroda*.)

This is the way the Socialist-Revolutionaries reason. And here, finally, is the "position" (if attempts to sit between two stools can be called a position) of the *Novaya Zhizn* "quarter-Bolsheviks", taken from the editorial in *Novaya Zhizn* of September 23.

"If a coalition with Konovalov and Kishkin is formed again, it will mean nothing but a new capitulation by the democracy and the abrogation of the Conference resolution on the formation of a responsible government on the platform of August 14....

"A homogeneous ministry of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries will be able to feel its responsibility as little as the responsible socialist ministers felt it in the coalition cabinet.... This government would not only be incapable of rallying the 'live forces' of the revolution around itself, but would not even be able to count on any active support from its vanguard—the proletariat.

"But the formation of another type of homogeneous cabinet, a government of the 'proletariat and poor peasants', would be, not a better, but an even worse way out of the situation, in fact it would not be a way out at all, but sheer bankruptcy. True, nobody is advancing such a slogan except in casual, timid and later systematically 'explained away' comments in *Rabochy Put*."

(This glaring untruth is "boldly" written by responsible journalists who have forgotten even the *Dyelo Naroda* editorial of September 21.)

"Formally, the Bolsheviks have now revived the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets'. It was withdrawn after the July days, when the Soviets, represented by the Central Executive Committee, definitely adopted an active anti-Bolshevik policy. Now, however, not only can the 'Soviet line' be regarded as straightened out, but there is every ground to assume that at the proposed Congress of Soviets the Bolsheviks will have a majority. Under such circumstances the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets', resurrected by the Bolsheviks, is a 'tactical line' for achieving precisely the dictatorship of the prole-

tariat and the 'poor peasants' True, the Soviets also imply the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies; the Bolshevik slogan therefore implies a power resting on the overwhelmingly greater part of the entire democracy of Russia. In that case, however, the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' loses all independent significance, for it makes the Soviets almost identical in composition to the Pre-parliament set up by the Conference...."

(*Novaya Zhizn*'s assertion is a brazen lie, equivalent to declaring that spurious and fraudulent democracy is "almost identical" to democracy: the Pre-parliament is a *sham* which passes off the will of the minority of the people, particularly of Kuskova, Berkenheim, Chaikovsky and Co., as the will of the majority. This is the first point. The second point is that at the Conference even the Peasants' Soviets that had been packed by the Avksentyevs and Chaikovskys gave such a high percentage opposed to the coalition that taken together with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, they would have brought about the *absolute collapse of the coalition*. And the third point is that "Power to the Soviets" means that the power of the Peasants' Soviets would embrace mainly the rural districts, and in the rural districts the predominance of the *poor* peasants is assured.)

"If it is one and the same thing, then the Bolshevik slogan should be immediately withdrawn. If, however, 'Power to the Soviets' is only a disguise for the dictatorship of the proletariat, then such a power would mean precisely the failure and collapse of the revolution.

"Does it need proof that the proletariat, isolated not only from the other classes in the country, but also from the real live forces of the democracy, will not be able either technically to lay hold of the state apparatus and set it in motion in an exceptionally complicated situation, or politically to resist all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain?

"The only power that will answer the requirements of the present situation is a really honest coalition within the democracy."

* * *

We apologise to the reader for quoting these lengthy extracts, but they are absolutely necessary. It is necessary to present a precise picture of the positions taken by the different parties hostile to the Bolsheviks. It is necessary to prove in a definite manner the extremely important

fact that *all* these parties have admitted that the question of the Bolsheviks taking full state power alone is not only feasible, but also urgent.

Let us now proceed to examine the arguments which convince "everybody", from the Cadets to the *Novaya Zhizn* people, that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power.

The respectable *Rech* advances no arguments whatsoever. It merely pours out upon the Bolsheviks a flood of the choicest and most irate abuse. The extract we quoted shows, among other things, how utterly wrong it would be to say, "Watch out, comrades, for what the enemy advises must certainly be bad", thinking that *Rech* is "provoking" the Bolsheviks to take power. If, instead of weighing up the general and concrete considerations in a practical way, we allow ourselves to be "persuaded" by the plea that the bourgeoisie are "provoking" us to take power, we shall be fooled by the bourgeoisie, for the latter will of course always maliciously prophesy millions of disasters that will result from the Bolsheviks taking power and will always maliciously shout, "It would be better to get rid of the Bolsheviks at one blow and 'for many a year' by allowing them to take power and then crushing them." These cries are also "provocation", if you will, but from a different angle. The Cadets and the bourgeoisie do not by any means "advise", and have never "advised", us to take power; they are only trying to *frighten* us with the allegedly insoluble problems of government.

No. We must not allow ourselves to be frightened by the screams of the frightened bourgeoisie. We must bear firmly in mind that we have never set ourselves "insoluble" social problems, and as for the *perfectly* soluble problem of taking immediate steps towards socialism, which is the only way out of the exceedingly difficult situation, that will be *solved only* by the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasants. Victory, and lasting victory, is now more than ever, more than anywhere else, assured for the proletariat in Russia if it takes power.

We shall in a purely practical manner discuss the *concrete* circumstances that make a certain moment unfavourable; but we shall not for a moment allow ourselves to be scared by the savage howls of the bourgeoisie; and we shall

not forget that the question of the Bolsheviks taking full power is becoming really *urgent*. Our Party will now be threatened with an immeasurably greater danger if we forget this than if we were to admit that taking power is "premature". In this respect, there can be *nothing* "premature" now: there is every chance in a million, except one or two perhaps, in favour of this.

Concerning the irate abuse poured out by *Rech*, we can, and must, say:

In savage cries of irritation
We hear the voice of approbation,
Not in dulcet sounds of praise.[52]

That the bourgeoisie hate us so passionately is one of the most striking proofs that we are showing the people the *right* ways and means of overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

* * *

This time, by way of rare exception, *Dyelo Naroda* did not deign to honour us with its abuse nor did it advance a ghost of an argument. It merely tried, by indirect hints, to *frighten* us with the prospect that "the Bolsheviks will be obliged to form a cabinet". I can quite believe that while trying to frighten us, the Socialist-Revolutionaries are themselves sincerely seared to death by the phantom of the frightened liberal. I can equally believe that the Socialist-Revolutionaries do succeed in certain exceptionally high and exceptionally rotten institutions, such as the Central Executive Committee and similar "contact" (i.e., contact with the Cadets, in plain language, hobnobbing with the Cadets) commissions, in scaring some Bolsheviks because, first, the atmosphere in all those Central Executives, pre-parliaments, etc., is abominable, putrid to the point of nausea, and harmful for *any* man to breathe for any length of time; and secondly, sincerity is contagious, and a sincerely frightened philistine is capable of converting even an individual revolutionary into a philistine for a time.

But however much we may, "humanly" speaking, understand the sincere fright of a Socialist-Revolutionary who has had the misfortune to be a minister in the company of

the Cadets, or who is eligible as a minister in the eyes of the Cadets, we would be committing a political error that might only too easily border on treachery to the proletariat if we allowed ourselves to be scared. Let us have your practical arguments, gentlemen! Cherish no hope that we shall allow ourselves to be scared by your fright!

* * *

This time we find practical arguments only in *Novaya Zhizn*. On this occasion the paper comes out in the role of counsel for the bourgeoisie, a role that suits it far better than that of counsel for the defence of the Bolsheviks, which so obviously "shocks" this lady with many good points.[53]

The counsel has advanced *six* pleas:

(1) the proletariat is "isolated from the other classes in the country";

(2) it is "isolated from the real live forces of the democracy";

(3) it "will not be able technically to lay hold of the state apparatus";

(4) it "will not be able to set this apparatus in motion";

(5) "the situation is exceptionally complicated";

(6) it "will be incapable of resisting all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain".

Novaya Zhizn formulates the first plea in a ridiculously clumsy fashion, for in capitalist and semi-capitalist society we know of only three classes: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie (which consists mainly of the peasantry), and the proletariat. What sense is there in talking about the proletariat being isolated from the other classes when the point at issue is the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie, revolution against the bourgeoisie?

Evidently, *Novaya Zhizn* wanted to say that the proletariat is isolated from the peasants, for it could not possibly have meant the landowners. It could not, however, say clearly and definitely that the proletariat is now isolated from the peasants, for the utter incorrectness of this assertion would be too obvious.

It is difficult to imagine that in a capitalist country the proletariat should be so little isolated from the petty bourgeoisie—and, mark you, in a revolution *against the bourgeoisie*—as the proletariat now is in Russia. The latest returns of the voting by "curias" *for* and *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie in Tsereteli's "Bulygin Duma", i.e., in the notorious "Democratic" Conference, constitute one of the objective and incontrovertible proofs of this. If we take the Soviets' curias we get:

	For coalition	Against
Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.	83	192
Soviets of Peasants' Deputies . .	102	70
All Soviets	185	262

So, the majority as a whole is on the side of the proletarian slogan: *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie. We have seen above that even the Cadets are obliged to admit the growth of Bolshevik influence in the Soviets. And here we have the Conference convened by *yesterday*'s leaders in the Soviets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who have an assured majority in the central institutions! Obviously, the *actual* degree to which the Bolsheviks predominate in the Soviets is here *understated*.

Both on the question of coalition with the bourgeoisie and on the question of immediately transferring the landed estates to peasant committees, the Bolsheviks already have a *majority* in the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, a *majority of the people*, a majority of the petty bourgeoisie. *Rabochy Put* No. 19, of September 24 quotes from No. 25 of the organ of the Socialist-Revolutionaries *Znamya Truda*[54] a report on a conference of local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies held in Petrograd on September 18. At this conference the Executive Committees of four Peasants' Soviets (Kostroma, Moscow, Samara and Taurida gubernias) voted for an unrestricted coalition. The Executive Committees of *three* gubernias and *two* armies (Vladimir, Ryazan and the Black Sea gubernias) voted in favour of a coalition without the Cadets. The Executive Committees

of *twenty-three* gubernias and *four* armies voted against a coalition.

So, the majority of the peasants are against a coalition!

So much for the "isolation of the proletariat".

We should note, by the way, that the supporters of a coalition were three outlying gubernias, Samara, Taurida and the Black Sea, where there is a relatively very large number of rich peasants and big landowners who employ hired labour, and also four industrial gubernias (Vladimir, Ryazan, Kostroma and Moscow) in which the peasant bourgeoisie are also stronger than in the majority of the gubernias in Russia. It would be interesting to collect more detailed figures on this question and to ascertain whether information is available concerning the *poor* peasants in the gubernias where there are larger numbers of "*rich*" peasants. It is interesting, moreover, that the "non-Russian groups" revealed a considerable predominance of opponents of a coalition, namely, 40 votes against 15. The policy of annexation and open violence pursued by the Bonapartist Kerensky and Co. towards the non-sovereign nations of Russia has borne fruit. Wide sections of the people of the oppressed nations (i.e., including the mass of the petty bourgeoisie) trust the proletariat of Russia more than they do the bourgeoisie, for here history has brought to the fore the struggle for liberation of the oppressed nations against the oppressing nations. The bourgeoisie has despicably betrayed the cause of freedom of the oppressed nations; the proletariat is faithful to the cause of freedom.

At the present time the national and agrarian questions are fundamental questions for the petty-bourgeois sections of the population of Russia. This is indisputable. And on both these questions the proletariat is "*not* isolated"—farther from it than ever. It has the majority of the people behind it. It *alone* is capable of pursuing such a determined, genuinely "revolutionary-democratic" policy on both questions which would immediately ensure the proletarian state power not only the support of the majority of the population, but also a real outburst of revolutionary enthusiasm among the people. This is because, for the first time, the people would not see the ruthless oppression of peasants by landowners and of Ukrainians by Great Russians on the part of the

government, as was the case under tsarism, nor the effort to continue the same policy camouflaged in pompous phrases under the republic, nor nagging, insult, chicanery, procrastination, underhand dealing and evasions (all that with which Kerensky rewards the peasants and the oppressed nations), but would receive warm sympathy proved by deeds, immediate and revolutionary measures against the landowners, immediate restitution of *full* freedom for Finland, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, for the Moslems, and so on.

The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik gentlemen know this perfectly well, and are therefore dragging in the semi-Cadet bosses of the co-operative societies to help them pursue their *reactionary*-democratic policy *against* the people. That is why they will never dare canvass popular opinion, take a popular referendum, or at least a vote of all the local Soviets, of all the local organisations, concerning definite points of practical policy, for example, whether all the landed estates should at once be handed over to peasant committees, whether certain demands of the Finns or the Ukrainians should be conceded, etc.

Take the question of peace, the crucial issue of today. The proletariat "is isolated from the other classes".... On this issue the proletariat truly represents the *whole* nation, all live and honest people *in all* classes, the vast majority of the petty bourgeoisie; because only the proletariat, on achieving power, will *immediately* offer a just peace to all the belligerent nations, because only the proletariat will dare take genuinely *revolutionary* measures (publication of the secret treaties, and so forth) to achieve the speediest and most just peace possible.

The proletariat is not isolated. The gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn* who are shouting about the proletariat being isolated are only betraying their subjective fear of the bourgeoisie. The objective state of affairs in Russia is undoubtedly such that the proletariat, *precisely at the present time*, is not "isolated" from the majority of the petty bourgeoisie. Precisely now, after the sad experience with the "coalition", the proletariat enjoys the sympathy of the *majority* of the people. *This* condition for the retention of power by the Bolsheviks *does exist*.

* * *

The second plea is that the proletariat "is isolated from the real live forces of the democracy". What this means is incomprehensible. It is probably "Greek", as the French say in such cases.

The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* would make good ministers. They would be quite suitable as ministers in a Cadet cabinet because all these ministers need is the ability to spout plausible, polished, but utterly meaningless phrases with which to cover up the dirtiest work and which are therefore sure of winning the applause of the imperialists and social-imperialists. The *Novaya Zhizn* writers are sure to earn the applause of the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov and Co. for asserting that the proletariat is isolated from the real live forces of the democracy, because *indirectly* they imply—or will be understood to imply—that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov, Kerensky and Co. are the "live forces of democracy".

This is not true. They are dead forces. The history of the coalition has proved this.

Overawed by the bourgeoisie and by their bourgeois-intellectual environment, the *Novaya Zhizn* people regard as "live" the *Right* wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks like *Volya Naroda*[55], *Yedinstvo*, and others who in essentials do not differ from the Cadets. We, however, regard as live only those who are connected with the people and not with the kulaks, only those whom the lessons of the coalition have repelled. The "active live forces" of the petty-bourgeois democracy are represented by the Left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. That this wing has gained strength, particularly since the July counter-revolution, is one of the surest objective signs that the proletariat is *not* isolated.

This has been made even more strikingly evident by the very recent swing to the left of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centrists, as is proved by Chernov's statement on September 24 that his group cannot support the new coalition with Kishkin and Co. This swing to the left of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centre, which up to now had constituted the overwhelming majority of the members of the Socialist-

Revolutionary Party, the leading and dominant party from the point of view of the number of votes it obtained in the urban and particularly in the rural districts, proves that the statements we quoted from *Dyelo Naroda* that the democracy must, under certain circumstances, "guarantee full support" for a purely Bolshevik government are at any rate not mere empty phrases.

Facts like the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centre to support the new coalition with Kishkin, or the predominance of the *opponents* of the coalition among the *Menshevik-defencists* in the provinces (Jordania in the Caucasus, etc.), are objective proof that a certain section of the *people* which has up to now followed the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries *will support* a purely Bolshevik government.

It is precisely from the *live* forces of the democracy that the proletariat of Russia is now not isolated.

* * *

The third plea, that the proletariat "will not be able technically to lay hold of the state apparatus" is, perhaps, the most common and most frequent. It deserves most attention for this reason, and also because it indicates one of the most *serious* and *difficult* tasks that will confront the victorious proletariat. There is no doubt that these tasks will be very difficult, but if we, who call ourselves socialists, indicate this difficulty only to *shirk* these tasks, in practice the distinction between us and the lackeys of the bourgeoisie will be reduced to nought. The difficulty of the tasks of the proletarian revolution should prompt the proletariat's supporters to make a closer and more definite study of the means of carrying out these tasks.

The state apparatus is primarily the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy. By saying that the proletariat will not he able technically to lay hold of this apparatus, the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* reveal their utter ignorance and their reluctance to take into account either facts or the arguments long ago cited in Bolshevik literature.

All the *Novaya Zhizn* writers regard themselves, if not as Marxists, then at least as being familiar with Marxism,

as educated socialists. But Marx, basing himself on the experience of the Paris Commune, taught that the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machine and use it for its own purposes, that the proletariat must smash this machine and substitute a new one for it (I deal with this in greater detail in a pamphlet, the first part of which is now finished and will soon appear under the title *The State and Revolution. A Marxist Theory of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution**). This new type of state machinery was created by the Paris Commune, and the Russian Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are a "state apparatus" of the *same type*. I have indicated this many times since April 4, 1917; it is dealt with in the resolutions of Bolshevik conferences and also in Bolshevik literature. *Novaya Zhizn* could, of course, have expressed its utter disagreement with Marx and with the Bolsheviks, but for a paper that has so often, and so haughtily, scolded the Bolsheviks for their allegedly frivolous attitude to difficult problems to evade this question completely is tantamount to issuing itself a certificate of mental poverty.

The proletariat *cannot* "lay hold of" the "state apparatus" and "set it in motion". But it can *smash* everything that is oppressive, routine, incorrigibly bourgeois in the old state apparatus and substitute its *own*, new apparatus. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are exactly this apparatus.

That *Novaya Zhizn* has completely forgotten about this "state apparatus" can be called nothing but monstrous. Behaving in this way in their theoretical reasoning, the *Novaya Zhizn* people are, in essence, doing in the sphere of political theory what the Cadets are doing in political practice. Because, if the proletariat and the revolutionary democrats *do not* in fact *need* a new state apparatus, then the Soviets lose their *raison d'être*, lose their right to existence, and the Kornilovite Cadets are *right* in trying to reduce the Soviets to nought!

This monstrous theoretical blunder and political blindness on the part of *Novaya Zhizn* is all the more monstrous

* See present edition, Vol. 25.—*Ed.*

because even the internationalist Mensheviks (with whom *Novaya Zhizn* formed a bloc during the last City Council elections in Petrograd) have on this question shown some proximity to the Bolsheviks. So, in the declaration of the Soviet majority made by Comrade Martov at the Democratic Conference, we read:

> "The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, set up in the first days of the revolution by a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves, constitute the new fabric of the revolutionary state that has replaced the outworn state fabric of the old regime...."

This is a little too flowery; that is to say, rhetoric here covers up lack of clear political thinking. The Soviets have *not yet* replaced the old "fabric", and this old "fabric" is *not* the state fabric of the old regime, but the state fabric of *both* tsarism *and* of the bourgeois republic. But at any rate, Martov here stands head and shoulders above *Novaya Zhizn*.

The Soviets are a new state apparatus which, in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants; and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army, but is very closely bound up with the people. From the military point of view this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces; from the revolutionary point of view, it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly, this apparatus provides a bond with the people, with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble, so easily verifiable and renewable, that nothing even remotely like it existed in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly, this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that its personnel is elected and subject to recall at the people's will without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly, it provides a close contact with the most varied professions, thereby facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most radical reforms without red tape. Fifthly, it provides an organisational form for the vanguard, i.e., for the most class-conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the *oppressed* classes, the workers and peasants, and so constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of

the oppressed classes can elevate, train, educate, and lead *the entire vast mass* of these classes, which has up to now stood completely outside of political life and history. Sixthly, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of the parliamentary system with those of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to vest in the people's elected representatives both legislative *and executive* functions. Compared with the bourgeois parliamentary system, this is an advance in democracy's development which is of world-wide, historic significance.

In 1905, our Soviets existed only in embryo, so to speak, as they lived altogether only a few weeks. Clearly, under the conditions of that time, their comprehensive development was out of the question. It is still out of the question in the 1917 Revolution, for a few months is an extremely short period and—this is most important—the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders have *prostituted* the Soviets, have reduced their role to that of a talking shop, of an accomplice in the compromising policy of the leaders. The Soviets have been rotting and decaying alive under the leadership of the Liebers, Dans, Tseretelis and Chernovs. The Soviets will be able to develop properly, to display their potentialities and capabilities to the full only by taking over *full* state power; for otherwise they have *nothing to do*, otherwise they are either simply embryos (and to remain an embryo too long is fatal), or playthings. "Dual power" means paralysis for the Soviets.

If the creative enthusiasm of the revolutionary classes had not given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would have been a hopeless cause, for the proletariat could certainly not retain power with the old state apparatus, and it is impossible to create a new apparatus immediately. The sad history of the prostitution of the Soviets by the Tseretelis and Chernovs, the history of the "coalition", is also the history of the liberation of the Soviets from petty-bourgeois illusions, of their passage through the "purgatory" of the practical experience of the utter abomination and filth of *all* and *sundry* bourgeois coalitions. Let us hope that this "purgatory" has steeled rather than weakened the Soviets.

* * *

The chief difficulty facing the proletarian revolution is the establishment on a country-wide scale of the most precise and most conscientious accounting and control, of *workers' control* of the production and distribution of goods.

When the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* argued that in advancing the slogan "workers' control" we were slipping into syndicalism, this argument was an example of the stupid schoolboy method of applying "Marxism" without studying it, just *learning it by rote* in the Struve manner. Syndicalism either repudiates the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, or else relegates it, as it does political power in general, to a back seat. We, however, put it in the forefront. If we simply say in unison with the *Novaya Zhizn* writers: *not* workers' control *but* state control, it is simply a bourgeois-reformist phrase, it is, in essence, a purely Cadet formula, because the Cadets have no objection to the workers *participating* in "state" control. The Kornilovite Cadets know perfectly well that such participation offers the bourgeoisie the best way of fooling the workers, the most subtle way of politically *bribing* all the Gvozdyovs, Nikitins, Prokopoviches, Tseretelis and the rest of that gang.

When we say: "workers' control", always *juxtaposing* this slogan to dictatorship of the proletariat, always putting it *immediately after* the latter, we thereby explain what kind of state we mean. The state is the organ of *class* domination. Of which class? If of the bourgeoisie, then it is the Cadet-Kornilov-"Kerensky" state which has been "Kornilovising" and "Kerenskyising" the working people of Russia for more than six months. If it is of the proletariat, if we are speaking of a proletarian state, *that is*, of the proletarian dictatorship, then workers' control *can* become the country-wide, all-embracing, omnipresent, most precise and most conscientious *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods.

This is the chief difficulty, the chief task that faces the proletarian, i.e., socialist, revolution. Without the Soviets, this task would be impracticable, at least in Russia. The Soviets *indicate* to the proletariat the organisational work which *can* solve this historically important problem.

This brings us to another aspect of the question of the state apparatus. In addition to the chiefly "oppressive" apparatus—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy—the modern state possesses an apparatus which has extremely close connections with the banks and syndicates, an apparatus which performs an enormous amount of accounting and registration work, if it may be expressed this way. This apparatus must not, and should not, be smashed. It must be wrested from the control of the capitalists; the capitalists and the wires they pull must be *cut off*, *lopped off*, *chopped away from* this apparatus; it must be *subordinated* to the proletarian Soviets; it must be expanded, made more comprehensive, and nation-wide. And this *can* be done by utilising the achievements already made by large-scale capitalism (in the same way as the proletarian revolution can, in general, reach its goal only by utilising these achievements).

Capitalism has created an accounting *apparatus* in the shape of the banks, syndicates, postal service, consumers' societies, and office employees' unions. *Without big banks socialism would be impossible.*

The big banks *are* the "state apparatus" which we *need* to bring about socialism, and which we *take ready-made* from capitalism; our task here is merely to *lop off* what *capitalistically mutilates* this excellent apparatus, to make it *even bigger*, even more democratic, even more comprehensive. Quantity will be transformed into quality. A single State Bank, the biggest of the big, with branches in every rural district, in every factory, will constitute as much as nine-tenths of the *socialist* apparatus. This will be country-wide *book-keeping*, country-wide *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods, this will be, so to speak, something in the nature of the *skeleton* of socialist society.

We can "lay hold of" and "set in motion" this "state apparatus" (which is not fully a state apparatus under capitalism, but which will be so with us, under socialism) at one stroke, by a single decree, because the actual work of book-keeping, control, registering, accounting and counting is performed by *employees*, the majority of whom themselves lead a proletarian or semi-proletarian existence.

By a single decree of the proletarian government these employees can and must be transferred to the status of state

employees, in the same way as the watchdogs of capitalism like Briand and other bourgeois ministers, by a single decree, transfer railwaymen on strike to the status of state employees. We shall need many more state employees of this kind, and more *can* be obtained, because capitalism has simplified the work of accounting and control, has reduced it to a comparatively simple system of *book-keeping*, which any literate person can do.

The conversion of the bank, syndicate, commercial, etc., etc., rank-and-file employees into state employees is quite feasible both technically (thanks to the preliminary work performed for us by capitalism, including finance capitalism) and politically, provided the *Soviets* exercise control and supervision.

As for the higher officials, of whom there are very few, but who gravitate towards the capitalists, they will have to be dealt with in the same way as the capitalists, i.e., "severely". Like the capitalists, they will offer *resistance*. This resistance will have to be *broken*, and if the immortally-naïve Peshekhonov, as early as June 1917, lisped like the infant that he was in state affairs, that "the resistance of the capitalists has been broken", this childish phrase, this childish boast, this childish swagger, *will be converted by the proletariat into reality*.

We can do this, for it is merely a question of breaking the resistance of an insignificant minority of the population, literally a handful of people, over each of whom the employees' unions, the trade unions, the consumers' societies and the Soviets will institute such *supervision* that every Tit Titych will be *surrounded* as the French were at Sedan.[56] We know these Tit Tityches by name: we only have to consult the lists of directors, board members, large shareholders, etc. There are several hundred, at most several thousand of them in the *whole* of Russia, and the proletarian state, with the apparatus of the Soviets, of the employees' unions, etc., will be able to appoint ten or even a hundred supervisers to each of them, so that instead of "breaking resistance" it may even be possible, by means of *workers' control* (over the capitalists), to make all resistance *impossible*.

The important thing will not be even the confiscation of the capitalists' property, but country-wide, all-embrac-

ing workers' control over the capitalists and their possible supporters. Confiscation alone leads nowhere, as it does not contain the element of organisation, of accounting for proper distribution. Instead of confiscation, we could easily impose a *fair* tax (even on the Shingaryov[57] scale, for instance), taking care, of course, to preclude the possibility of anyone evading assessment, concealing the truth, evading the law. And this possibility can be *eliminated only* by the workers' control of the *workers' state.*

Compulsory syndication, i.e., compulsory amalgamation in associations under state control—this is what capitalism has prepared the way for, this is what has been carried out in Germany by the Junkers' state, this is what can be easily carried out in Russia by the Soviets, by the proletarian dictatorship, and this is what will *provide us with a state apparatus* that will be universal, up-to-date, and non-bureaucratic.*

* * *

The fourth plea of the counsels for the bourgeoisie is that the proletariat will not be able "to set the state apparatus in motion". There is nothing new in this plea compared with the preceding one. We could not, of course, either lay hold of or set in motion the old apparatus. The new apparatus, the Soviets, *has already* been set in motion by "a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves". We only have to free it from the *shackles* put on it by the domination of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders. This apparatus *is already* in motion; we only have to free it from the monstrous, petty-bourgeois impediments preventing it from going full speed ahead.

Two circumstances must be considered here to supplement what has already been said. In the first place, the new means of control have been created *not* by us, but by capitalism in its military-imperialist stage; and in the second place, it is important to introduce more democracy into the *administration* of a proletarian state.

* For further details of the meaning of compulsory syndication see my pamphlet: *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It.* (See present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 346-49.—*Ed.*)

The grain monopoly and bread rationing were introduced not by us, but by the capitalist state in war-time. It had already introduced universal labour conscription within the framework of capitalism, which is war-time penal servitude for the workers. But here too, as in all its history-making activities, the proletariat takes its weapons from capitalism and does not "invent" or "create them out of nothing".

The grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription in the hands of the proletarian state, in the hands of sovereign Soviets, will be the most powerful means of accounting and control, means which, applied to the capitalists, and to *the rich in general*, applied to them by the workers, will provide a force unprecedented in history for "setting the state apparatus in motion", for overcoming the resistance of the capitalists, for subordinating them to the proletarian state. These means of control and of *compelling people to work* will be more potent than the laws of the Convention and its guillotine. The guillotine *only* terrorised, only broke *active* resistance. *For us, this is not enough.*

For us, this is not enough. We must not only "terrorise" the capitalists, i.e., make them feel the omnipotence of the proletarian state and give up all idea of actively resisting it. We must also break *passive* resistance, which is undoubtedly more dangerous and harmful. We must not only break resistance of every kind. We must also *compel the capitalists to work* within the framework of the new state organisation. It is not enough to "remove" the capitalists; we must (after removing the undesirable and incorrigible "resisters") employ them *in the service of the new state*. This applies both to the capitalists and to the upper section of the bourgeois intellectuals, office employees, etc.

And we have the means to do this. The means and instruments for this have been placed in our hands by the capitalist state in the war. These means are the grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the fundamental, the first and most important rule the Soviets of Workers' Deputies can and will introduce when they become the ruling power.

Every worker has a work-book. This book does not degrade him, although *at present* it is undoubtedly a docu-

ment of capitalist wage-slavery, certifying that the workman belongs to some parasite.

The Soviets will introduce work-books *for the rich* and *then* gradually for the whole population (in a peasant country work-books will probably not be needed for a long time for the overwhelming majority of the peasants). The work-book will cease to be the badge of the "common herd", a document of the "lower" orders, a certificate of wage-slavery. It will become a document certifying that in the new society there are no longer any "workmen", nor, on the other hand, are there any longer men *who do not work*.

The rich will be obliged to get a work-book from the workers' or office employees' union with which their occupation is most closely connected, and every week, or other definite fixed period, they will have to get from that union a certificate to the effect that they are performing their work conscientiously; without this they will not be able to receive bread ration cards or provisions in general. The proletarian state will say: we need good organisers of banking and the amalgamation of enterprises (in this matter the capitalists have more experience, and it is easier to work with experienced people), and we need far, far more engineers, agronomists, technicians and scientifically trained specialists of every kind than were needed before. We shall give all these specialists work to which they are accustomed and which they can cope with; in all probability we shall introduce complete wage equality only gradually and shall pay these specialists higher salaries during the transition period. We shall place them, however, under comprehensive workers' control and we shall achieve the complete and absolute operation of the rule "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." We shall not invent the organisational form of the work, but take it ready-made from capitalism—we shall take over the banks, syndicates, the best factories, experimental stations, academies, and so forth; all that we shall have to do is to borrow the best models furnished by the advanced countries.

Of course, we shall not in the least descend to a utopia, we are not deserting the soil of most sober, practical reason when we say that the entire capitalist class will offer the most stubborn resistance, but this resistance will be broken

by the organisation of the entire population in Soviets. Those capitalists who are exceptionally stubborn and recalcitrant will, of course, have to be punished by the confiscation of their whole property and by imprisonment. On the other hand, however, the victory of the proletariat will bring about *an increase* in the number of cases of the kind that I read about in today's *Izvestia* for example:

"On September 26, two engineers came to the Central Council of Factory Committees to report that a group of engineers had decided to form a union of socialist engineers. The Union believes that the present time is actually the beginning of the social revolution and places itself at the disposal of the working people, desiring, in defence of the workers' interests, to work in complete unity with the workers' organisations. The representatives of the Central Council of Factory Committees answered that the Council will gladly set up in its organisation an Engineers' Section which will embody in its programme the main theses of the First Conference of Factory Committees on workers' control over production. A joint meeting of delegates of the Central Council of Factory Committees and of the initiative group of socialist engineers will be held within the next few days." (*Izvestia*, September 27, 1917.)

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The proletariat, we are told, will not be able to set the state apparatus in motion.

Since the 1905 revolution, Russia has been governed by 130,000 landowners, who have perpetrated endless violence against 150,000,000 people, heaped unconstrained abuse upon them, and condemned the vast majority to inhuman toil and semi-starvation.

Yet we are told that the 240,000 members of the Bolshevik Party will not be able to govern Russia, govern her in the interests of the poor and against the rich. These 240,000 are already backed by no less than a million votes of the adult population, for this is precisely the proportion between the number of Party members and the number of votes cast for the Party that has been established by the experience of Europe and the experience of Russia as shown, for example, by the elections to the Petrograd City Council last August. We therefore already have a "state apparatus" of *one million* people devoted to the socialist state for the sake of high ideals and not for the sake of a fat sum received on the 20th of every month.

In addition to that we have a "magic way" to enlarge our state apparatus *tenfold* at once, at one stroke, a way which no capitalist state ever possessed or could possess. This magic way is to draw the working people, to draw the poor, into the daily work of state administration.

To explain how easy it will be to employ this magic way and how faultlessly it will operate, let us take the simplest and most striking example possible.

The state is to forcibly evict a certain family from a flat and move another in. This often happens in the capitalist state, and it will also happen in our proletarian or socialist state.

The capitalist state evicts a working-class family which has lost its breadwinner and cannot pay the rent. The bailiff appears with police, or militia, a whole squad of them. To effect an eviction in a working-class district a whole detachment of Cossacks is required. Why? Because the bailiff and the militiaman refuse to go without a very strong military guard. They know that the scene of an eviction arouses such fury among the neighbours, among thousands and thousands of people who have been driven to the verge of desperation, arouses such hatred towards the capitalists and the capitalist state, that the bailiff and the squad of militiamen run the risk of being torn to pieces at any minute. Large military forces are required, several regiments must be brought into a big city, and the troops must come from some distant, outlying region so that the soldiers will not be familiar with the life of the urban poor, so that the soldiers will not be "infected" with socialism.

The proletarian state has to forcibly move a very poor family into a rich man's flat. Let us suppose that our squad of workers' militia is fifteen strong; two sailors, two soldiers, two class-conscious workers (of whom, let us suppose, only one is a member of our Party, or a sympathiser), one intellectual, and eight from the poor working people, of whom at least five must be women, domestic servants, unskilled labourers, and so forth. The squad arrives at the rich man's flat, inspects it and finds that it consists of five rooms occupied by two men and two women—"You must squeeze up a bit into two rooms this winter, citizens, and prepare two rooms for two families now living in cellars. Until the

time, with the aid of engineers (you are an engineer, aren't you?), we have built good dwellings for everybody, you will have to squeeze up a little. Your telephone will serve ten families. This will save a hundred hours of work wasted on shopping, and so forth. Now in your family there are two unemployed persons who can perform light work: a citizeness fifty-five years of age and a citizen fourteen years of age. They will be on duty for three hours a day supervising the proper distribution of provisions for ten families and keeping the necessary account of this. The student citizen in our squad will now write out this state order in two copies and you will be kind enough to give us a signed declaration that you will faithfully carry it out."

This, in my opinion, can illustrate how the distinction between the old bourgeois and the new socialist state apparatus and state administration could be illustrated.

We are not utopians. We know that an unskilled labourer or a cook cannot immediately get on with the job of state administration. In this we agree with the Cadets, with Breshkovskaya, and with Tsereteli. We differ, however, from these citizens in that we demand an immediate break with the prejudiced view that only the rich, or officials chosen from rich families, are capable of *administering* the state, of performing the ordinary, everyday work of administration. We demand that *training* in the work of state administration be conducted by class-conscious workers and soldiers and that this training be begun at once, i.e., that a *beginning* be made at once in training all the working people, all the poor, for this work.

We know that the Cadets are also willing to teach the people democracy. Cadet ladies are willing to deliver lectures to domestic servants on equal rights for women in accordance with the best English and French sources. And also, at the very next concert-meeting, before an audience of thousands, an exchange of kisses will be arranged on the platform: the Cadet lady lecturer will kiss Breshkovskaya, Breshkovskaya will kiss ex-Minister Tsereteli, and the grateful people will therefore receive an object-lesson in republican equality, liberty and fraternity....

Yes, we agree that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya and Tsereteli are in their own way devoted to democracy and are

propagating it among the people. But what is to be done if our conception of democracy is somewhat different from theirs?

In our opinion, to ease the incredible burdens and miseries of the war and also to heal the terrible wounds the war has inflicted on the people, *revolutionary* democracy is needed, *revolutionary* measures of the kind described in the example of the distribution of housing accommodation in the interests of the poor. *Exactly the same* procedure must be adopted in both town and country for the distribution of provisions, clothing, footwear, etc., in respect of the land in the rural districts, and so forth. For the administration of the state in *this* spirit we can *at once set in motion a state* apparatus consisting of ten if not twenty million people, an apparatus such as no capitalist state has ever known. We alone can create such an apparatus, for we are sure of the fullest and devoted sympathy of the vast majority of the population. We alone can create such an apparatus, because we have class-conscious workers disciplined by long capitalist "schooling" (it was not for nothing that we went to learn in the school of capitalism), workers who are *capable* of forming a workers' militia and of *gradually* expanding it (beginning to expand it at once) into a militia *embracing the whole people*. The class-conscious workers must lead, but for the work of administration they can enlist the vast mass of the working and oppressed people.

It goes without saying that this new apparatus is bound to make mistakes in taking its first steps. But did not the peasants make mistakes when they emerged from serfdom and began to manage their own affairs? Is there any way other than practice by which the people can learn to govern themselves and to avoid mistakes? Is there any way other than by proceeding immediately to genuine self-government by the people? The chief thing now is to abandon the prejudiced bourgeois-intellectualist view that only special officials, who by their very social position are entirely dependent upon capital, can administer the state. The chief thing is to put an end to the state of affairs in which bourgeois officials and "socialist" ministers are trying to govern in the old way, but are incapable of doing so and, after seven months, are faced with a peasant revolt in a peasant country! The chief thing is to imbue the oppressed and the working

people with confidence in their own strength, to prove to them in practice that they can and must themselves ensure the *proper*, most strictly regulated and organised distribution of bread, all kinds of food, milk, clothing, housing, etc., *in the interests of the poor*. Unless this is done, Russia *cannot* be saved from collapse and ruin. The conscientious, bold, universal move to hand over administrative work to proletarians and semi-proletarians, will, however, rouse such unprecedented revolutionary enthusiasm among the people, will so multiply the people's forces in combating distress, that much that seemed impossible to our narrow, old, bureaucratic forces will become possible for the millions, who will *begin to work for themselves* and not for the capitalists, the gentry, the bureaucrats, and not out of fear of punishment.

* * *

Pertinent to the question of the state apparatus is also the question of centralism raised with unusual vehemence and ineptitude by Comrade Bazarov in *Novaya Zhizn* No. 138, of September 27, in an article entitled: "The Bolsheviks and the Problem of Power".

Comrade Bazarov reasons as follows: "The Soviets are not an apparatus suitable for all spheres of state life", for, he says, seven months' experience has shown, and "scores and hundreds of documents in the possession of the Economic Department of the St. Petersburg Executive Committee" have confirmed, that the Soviets, although actually enjoying "full power" in many places, "have not been able to achieve anything like satisfactory results in combating economic ruin". What is needed is an apparatus "divided up according to branches of production, with strict centralisation within each branch, and subordinated to one, country-wide centre". "It is a matter", if you please, "not of replacing the old apparatus, but merely of reforming it ... no matter how much the Bolsheviks may jeer at people with a plan...."

All these arguments of Comrade Bazarov's are positively amazing for their helplessness, they echo the arguments of the bourgeoisie and reflect their class point of view.

In fact, to say that the Soviets have anywhere in Russia

ever enjoyed "full power" is simply ridiculous (if it is not a repetition of the selfish class lie of the capitalists). Full power means power over all the land, over all the banks, over all the factories; a man who is at all familiar with the facts of history and science on the connection between politics and economics could not have "forgotten" this "trifling" circumstance.

The bourgeoisie's device is to *withhold* power from the Soviets, *sabotage* every important step they take, while at the same time retaining government in their own hands, retaining power over the land, the banks, etc., and then throwing the blame for the ruin upon the Soviets! This is exactly what the whole sad experience of the coalition amounts to.

The Soviets have never had full power, and the measures they have taken could not result in anything but palliatives that added to the confusion.

The effort to prove the necessity for centralism to the Bolsheviks who are centralists by conviction, by their programme and by the entire tactics of their Party, is really like forcing an open door. The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are wasting their time only because they have totally failed to understand the meaning and significance of our jeers at their "country-wide" point of view. And the *Novaya Zhizn* people have failed to understand this because they merely pay *lip-service* to the doctrine of the class struggle, but do not accept it seriously. Repeating the words about the class struggle they have learned by rote, they are constantly slipping into the "above-class point of view", amusing in theory and reactionary in practice, and are calling this fawning upon the bourgeoisie a "country-wide" plan.

The state, dear people, is a class concept. The state is an organ or instrument of violence exercised by one class against another. So long as it is an instrument of violence exercised by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, the proletariat can have only one slogan: *destruction* of this state. But when the state will be a proletarian state, when it will be an instrument of violence exercised by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, we shall be fully and unreservedly in favour of a strong state power and of centralism.

To put it in more popular language, we do not jeer at "plans", but at Bazarov and Co.'s failure to understand

that by repudiating "workers' control", by repudiating the "dictatorship of the proletariat" they *are for* the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. There is no middle course; a middle course is the futile dream of the petty-bourgeois democrat.

Not a single central body, not a single Bolshevik has ever argued against *centralisation* of the Soviets, against their amalgamation. None of us objects to having factory committees in each branch of production, or to their centralisation. Bazarov is *wide of the mark*.

We laugh, have laughed, and will laugh not at "centralism", and not at "plans", but at *reformism*, because, after the experience of the coalition, your reformism is utterly ridiculous. And to say "not replace the apparatus but reform it" means to be a reformist, means to become not a revolutionary but a reformist democrat. Reformism means nothing more than concessions on the part of the ruling class, but *not* its overthrow; it makes concessions, but power remains in *its hands*.

This is precisely what has been tried during six months of the coalition.

This is what we laugh at. Having failed to obtain a thorough grasp of the doctrine of the class struggle, Bazarov allows himself to be caught by the bourgeoisie who sing in chorus "Just so, just so, we are by no means opposed to reform, we are in favour of the workers participating in country-wide control, we fully agree with that", and good Bazarov *objectively* sings the descant for the capitalists.

This has always been and always will be the case with people who in the thick of intense class struggle want to take up a "middle" position. And it is because-the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are incapable of understanding the class struggle that their policy is such a ridiculous and eternal oscillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Get busy on "plans", dear citizens, that is not politics, that is not the class struggle; here you may be of use to the people. You have many economists on your paper. Unite with those engineers and others who are willing to work on problems of regulating production and distribution; devote the centre page of your big "apparatus" (your paper) to a practical study of precise facts on the production and distribution of goods in Russia, on banks, syndicates, etc.,

etc.—that is how you will be of use to the people; that is how your sitting between two stools will not be particularly harmful; such work on "plans" will earn not the ridicule, but the gratitude of the workers.

When the proletariat is victorious it will do the following, it will set economists, engineers, agronomists, and so forth, to work *under the control* of the workers' organisations on drawing up a "plan", on verifying it, on devising labour-saving methods of centralisation, on devising the simplest, cheapest, most convenient and universal measures and methods of control. For this we shall pay the economists, statisticians and technicians good money ... but we shall not give them anything to eat if they do not perform this work conscientiously and entirely *in the interests of the working people.*

We are in favour of centralism and of a "plan", but of the centralism and plan of the *proletarian* state, of proletarian regulation of production and distribution in the interests of the poor, the working people, the exploited, *against* the exploiters. We can agree to only one meaning of the term "country-wide", namely, that which breaks the resistance of the capitalists, which gives all power to the majority of the people, i.e., the proletarians and semi-proletarians, the workers and the poor peasants.

* * *

The fifth plea is that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power because "the situation is exceptionally complicated"....

O wise men! They, perhaps, would be willing to reconcile themselves to revolution if only the "situation" were not "exceptionally complicated".

Such revolutions never occur, and sighs for such a revolution amount to nothing more than the reactionary wails of a bourgeois intellectual. Even if a revolution has started in a situation that seemed to be not very complicated, the development of the revolution itself *always* creates an *exceptionally* complicated situation. A revolution, a real, profound, a "people's" revolution, to use Marx's expression,[58] is the incredibly complicated and painful process

of the death of the old and birth of the new social order, of the mode of life of tens of millions of people. Revolution is a most intense, furious, desperate class struggle and civil war. Not a single great revolution in history has taken place without civil war. And only a "man in a muffler"[59] can think that civil war is conceivable without an "exceptionally complicated situation".

If the situation were not exceptionally complicated there would be no revolution. If you are afraid of wolves don't go into the forest.

There is nothing to discuss in the fifth plea, because there is no economic, political, or any other meaning whatever in it. It contains only the yearning of people who are distressed and frightened by the revolution. To characterise this yearning I shall take the liberty of mentioning two little things from my personal experience.

I had a conversation with a wealthy engineer shortly before the July days. This engineer had once been a revolutionary, had been in the Social-Democratic movement and even a member of the Bolshevik Party. Now he was full of fear and rage at the turbulent and indomitable workers. "If they were at least like the German workers," he said (he is an educated man and has been abroad), "of course, I understand that the social revolution is, in general, inevitable, but here, when the workers' level has been so reduced by the war ... it is not a revolution, it is an abyss."

He was willing to accept the social revolution if history were to lead to it in the peaceful, calm, smooth and precise manner of a German express train pulling into a station. A sedate conductor would open the carriage door and announce: "Social Revolution Station! *Alle aussteigen!* (All change!)" In that case he would have no objection to changing his position of engineer under the Tit Tityches to that of engineer under the workers' organisations.

That man has seen strikes. He knows what a storm of passion the most ordinary strike arouses even in the most peaceful times. He, of course, understands how many million times more furious this storm must be when the class struggle has aroused *all* the working people of a vast country, when war and exploitation have driven almost to desperation millions of people who for centuries have been torment-

ed by the landowners, for decades have been robbed and downtrodden by the capitalists and the tsar's officials. He understands all this "theoretically", he only pays *lip-service* to this, he is simply terrified by the "exceptionally complicated situation".

After the July days, thanks to the extremely solicitous attention with which the Kerensky government honoured me, I was obliged to go underground. Of course, it was the workers who sheltered people like us. In a small working-class house in a remote working-class suburb of Petrograd, dinner is being served. The hostess puts bread on the table. The host says: "Look what fine bread. 'They' dare not give us bad bread now. And we had almost given up even thinking that we'd ever get good bread in Petrograd again."

I was amazed at this class appraisal of the July days. My thoughts had been revolving around the political significance of those events, weighing the role they played in the general course of events, analysing the situation that caused this zigzag in history and the situation it would create, and how we ought to change our slogans and alter our Party apparatus to adapt it to the changed situation. As for bread, I, who had not known want, did not give it a thought. I took bread for granted, as a by-product of the writer's work, as it were. The mind approaches the foundation of everything, the class struggle for bread, through political analysis that follows an extremely complicated and devious path.

This member of the oppressed class, however, even though one of the well-paid and quite intelligent workers, takes the bull by the horns with that astonishing simplicity and straightforwardness, with that firm determination and amazing clarity of outlook from which we intellectuals are as remote as the stars in the sky. The whole world is divided into two camps: "us", the working people, and "them", the exploiters. Not a shadow of embarrassment over what had taken place; it was just one of the battles in the long struggle between labour and capital. When you fell trees, chips fly.

"What a painful thing is this 'exceptionally complicated situation' created by the revolution," that's how the bourgeois intellectual thinks and feels.

"We squeezed 'them' a bit; 'they' won't dare to lord it over us as they did before. We'll squeeze again—and chuck them out altogether," that's how the worker thinks and feels.

* * *

The sixth and last plea: the proletariat "will be incapable of resisting all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain".

Don't try to scare us, gentlemen, you won't succeed. We saw these hostile forces and their pressure in Kornilovism (from which the Kerensky regime in no way differs). Everybody saw, and the people remember, how the proletariat and the poor peasants swept away the Kornilov gang, and how pitiful and helpless proved to be the position of the supporters of the bourgeoisie and of the few exceptionally well-to-do local small landowners who were exceptionally "hostile" to the revolution. *Dyelo Naroda* of September 30 urges the workers to "be patient and put up with" Kerensky (i.e., Kornilov) and the fake Tsereteli Bulygin Duma until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (convened under the protection of "military measures" against insurgent peasants!) and, with great gusto, it repeats precisely *Novaya Zhizn*'s sixth plea and shouts until it is hoarse: "The Kerensky government will under no circumstances submit" (to the rule of the Soviets, the rule of the workers and peasants, which *Dyelo Naroda*, not wishing to lag behind the pogrom-mongers and anti-Semites, monarchists and Cadets, calls the rule of "Trotsky and Lenin": these are the lengths to which the Socialist-Revolutionaries go!).

But neither *Novaya Zhizn* nor *Dyelo Naroda* can scare the class-conscious workers. "The Kerensky government," you say, "will under no circumstances submit", i.e., it will repeat the Kornilov revolt, to put it more simply, bluntly and clearly. And the gentlemen of *Dyelo Naroda* dare to say that this will be "civil war", that this is a "horrible prospect"!

No, gentlemen, you will not fool the workers. It will not be civil war but a hopeless revolt of a handful of Kornilovites. If they want to "refuse to submit" to the people and at all costs provoke a repetition on a wide scale of what

happened to the Kornilov men in Vyborg—*if* that is what the Socialist-Revolutionaries *want*, if that is what the member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party Kerensky wants, he may drive the people to desperation. But you will not scare the workers and soldiers with this, gentlemen.

What boundless insolence. They faked up a new Bulygin Duma; by means of fraud they recruited a crowd of reactionary co-operators and village kulaks to help them, added to these the capitalists and landowners (the so-called property-owning classes) and with the aid of this gang of Kornilovites they want *to thwart the will of the people*, the will of the workers and peasants.

They have brought affairs in a peasant country to such a pass that peasant revolt is spreading everywhere like a river in flood! Think of it! In a democratic republic in which 80 per cent of the population are peasants, the peasants have been driven to revolt.... This same *Dyelo Naroda*, Chernov's newspaper, the organ of the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, which on September 30 has the effrontery to advise the workers and peasants to "be patient", was obliged to admit in a leading article on September 29:

"*So far practically nothing* has been done to put an end to those relations of *bondage* that still *prevail* in the villages of central Russia."

This same *Dyelo Naroda*, in the same leading article of September 29, says that "the dead hand of Stolypin is still making itself strongly felt" in the methods employed by the "revolutionary ministers"; in other words, putting it more clearly and simply, it brands Kerensky, Nikitin, Kishkin and Co. as *Stolypins*.

The "Stolypins" Kerensky and Co. have driven the peasants to revolt, are now taking "military measures" against the peasants, are trying to soothe the people with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (although Kerensky and Tsereteli have already *deceived* the people once by solemnly proclaiming on July 8 that the Constituent Assembly would be convened on the appointed date, September 17; they then *broke their promise* and postponed the Constituent Assembly even against the advice of the *Menshevik Dan*, postponed the Constituent Assembly not to the end of October as the Menshevik Central Executive Committee of

that time wished, but to the end of November). The "Stolypins" Kerensky and Co. are trying to soothe the people with the imminent convocation of the Constituent Assembly, as if the people can believe those who have already lied in this matter, as if the people can believe that the Constituent Assembly will be *properly* convened by a government which has taken *military measures* in remote villages, that is to say, is openly *conniving* at the arbitrary arrest of class-conscious peasants and the *rigging* of the elections.

The government has driven the peasants to revolt and now has the effrontery to say to them: "You must 'be patient', you must wait, trust the government which is pacifying insurgent peasants by 'military measures'!"

To bring matters to such a pitch that hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers perish in the offensive after June 19, the war is being protracted, German sailors have mutinied and are throwing their officers overboard, to bring matters to such a pitch, all the time uttering phrases about peace but *not offering* a just peace to *all* the belligerents, and yet to have the effrontery to tell the workers and peasants, to tell the dying soldiers, "you must be patient", trust the government of the "Stolypin man" Kerensky, trust the Kornilov generals for another month, perhaps in that month they will send several tens of thousands more soldiers to the slaughter.... "You must be patient"....

Isn't that shameless?

But you won't fool the soldiers, gentlemen of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky's fellow party members.

The workers and soldiers will not endure the Kerensky government for a single day, for an *extra* hour, for they know that the *Soviet* Government will *immediately* offer all the belligerents a just peace and therefore will *in all probability* achieve an immediate armistice and a speedy peace.

Not for a single day, not for an *extra* hour will the soldiers of our peasant army allow the Kerensky government—the government which is employing *military measures* to suppress the peasant revolt—to remain in power against the will of the Soviets.

No, gentlemen of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky's fellow party members, you won't fool the workers and peasants any more.

* * *

On the question of the pressure by hostile forces which the mortally frightened *Novaya Zhizn* assures us will sweep away the proletarian dictatorship, still another monstrous logical and political mistake is made, which only people who have allowed themselves to be frightened out of their wits can fail to see.

"Pressure by hostile forces will sweep away the proletarian dictatorship," you say. Very well. But you are all economists and educated people, dear fellow-citizens. You all know that to contrast democracy to the bourgeoisie is senseless and a sign of ignorance; it is the same as contrasting pounds to yards, for there is a democratic bourgeoisie and undemocratic groups of the petty bourgeoisie (capable of raising a Vendée).

"Hostile forces" is merely an empty phrase. The class term is *bourgeoisie* (backed by the landowners).

The bourgeoisie and the landowners, the proletariat, and the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, primarily the peasants—these are the three main "forces" into which Russia, like *every* capitalist country, is divided. These are the three main "forces" that have long been revealed in every capitalist country (including Russia) not only by scientific economic analysis, but also by the *political experience* of the modern history of *all* countries, by the experience of *all* European revolutions since the eighteenth century, by the experience of the *two* Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917.

So, you threaten the proletariat with the prospect that its rule will be swept away by the pressure of the bourgeoisie? That, and that alone, is what your threat amounts to, it has no other meaning.

Very well. If, for example, the bourgeoisie can sweep away the rule of the workers and poor peasants, then the only alternative is a "coalition", i.e., an alliance, or agreement, between the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie. Nothing else can be contemplated!

But coalition has been tried for about six months and it has led to bankruptcy, and you yourselves, my dear but dense citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*, have *renounced* coalition.

So what do we get?

You have become so muddled, citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*, you have allowed yourselves to be so scared, that you cannot think straight in the extremely simple matter of *counting even up to three, let alone up to five.*

Either all power to the bourgeoisie—the slogan you have long ceased to advocate, and which the bourgeoisie themselves dare not even hint at, for they know that the people overthrew this power with one hitch of the shoulder at the time of the April 20-21 events, and would overthrow it now with thrice that determination and ruthlessness; or power to the petty bourgeoisie, i.e., a coalition (alliance, agreement) between them and the bourgeoisie, for the petty bourgeoisie do not wish to and *cannot* take power alone and independently, as has been proved by the experience of all revolutions, and as is proved by economics, which explains that in a capitalist country it is possible to stand for capital and it is possible to stand for labour, but it is impossible to stand for long in between. In Russia this coalition has for six months tried scores of ways and failed.

Or, finally, all power to the proletarians and the poor peasants against the bourgeoisie in order to break their resistance. This has not yet been tried, and you, gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn*, are *dissuading* the people from this, you are trying to frighten them with your own fear of the bourgeoisie.

No fourth way can be invented.

If *Novaya Zhizn*, therefore, is afraid of the proletarian dictatorship and rejects it because, as it claims, the proletarian power may be defeated by the bourgeoisie, it is tantamount to its *surreptitiously reverting* to the position of *compromise* with the capitalists! It is as clear as daylight, that whoever is afraid of resistance, whoever does not believe that it is possible to break this resistance, whoever warns the people: "beware of the resistance of the capitalists, you will not be able to cope with it", is *thereby* again calling for compromise with the capitalists.

Novaya Zhizn is hopelessly and pitifully muddled, as are all the petty-bourgeois democrats who now realise that the coalition is bankrupt, dare not defend it openly and, at the same time, protected by the bourgeoisie, fear the transfer of all power to the proletarians and poor peasants.

* * *

To fear the resistance of the capitalists and yet to call oneself a revolutionary, to wish to be regarded as a socialist—isn't that disgraceful? How low must international socialism, corrupted by opportunism, have fallen ideologically if such voices *could* be raised?

We have already seen the strength of the capitalists' resistance; the entire people have seen it, for the capitalists are more class-conscious than the other classes and at once realised the significance of the Soviets, at once exerted *all their efforts* to the utmost, resorted to everything, went to all lengths, resorted to the most incredible lies and slander, to military plots *in order to frustrate the Soviets*, to reduce them to nought, to prostitute them (with the aid of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), to transform them into talking-shops, to wear down the peasants and workers by months and months of empty talk and playing at revolution.

We have not yet seen, however, the strength of resistance of the proletarians and poor peasants, for this strength will become fully apparent only when power is in the hands of the proletariat, when tens of millions of people who have been crushed by want and capitalist slavery see from experience and *feel* that state power has passed into the hands of the oppressed classes, that the state is helping the poor to fight the landowners and capitalists, is *breaking* their resistance. *Only* then shall we see what untapped forces of resistance to the capitalists are latent among the people; only then will what Engels called "latent socialism"[60] manifest itself. Only then, for every *ten thousand* overt and concealed enemies of working-class rule, manifesting themselves actively or by passive resistance, there will arise *a million* new fighters who had been politically dormant, writhing in the torments of poverty and despair, having ceased to believe that they were human, that they had the right to live, that they too could be served by the entire might of the modern centralised state, that contingents of the proletarian militia could, with the fullest confidence, also call upon *them* to take a direct, immediate, daily part in state administration.

The capitalists and landowners, with the kind help of Plekhanov, Breshkovskaya, Tsereteli, Chernov and Co., have done *everything* in their power to *defile* the democratic republic, to defile it by servility to wealth to such a degree that the people are being overcome by apathy, indifference; *it is all the same to them*, because the hungry man cannot see the difference between the republic and the monarchy; the freezing, barefooted, worn-out soldier sacrificing his life for alien interests is not inclined to love the republic.

But when every labourer, every unemployed worker, every cook, every ruined peasant sees, not from the newspapers, but with his own eyes, that the proletarian state is not cringing to wealth but is helping the poor, that this state does not hesitate to adopt revolutionary measures, that it confiscates surplus stocks of provisions from the parasites-and distributes them to the hungry, that it forcibly installs the homeless in the houses of the rich, that it compels the rich to pay for milk but does not give them a drop until the children of *all* poor families are sufficiently supplied, that the land is being transferred to the working people and the factories and banks are being placed under the control of the workers, and that immediate and severe punishment is meted out to the millionaires who conceal their wealth—when the poor see and feel this, no capitalist or kulak forces, no forces of world finance capital which manipulates thousands of millions, will vanquish the people's revolution; on the contrary, *the socialist revolution* will triumph all over the world for it is maturing in all countries.

Our revolution will be invincible if it is not afraid of itself, if it transfers all power to the proletariat, for behind us stand the immeasurably larger, more developed, more organised world forces of the proletariat which are temporarily held down by the war but not destroyed; on the contrary, the war has multiplied them.

* * *

How can one be afraid that the Bolshevik government, that is to say, the proletarian government, which is assured of the devoted support of the poor peasants, will be "swept away" by the capitalist gentlemen! What shortsightedness!

What disgraceful fear of the people! What hypocrisy! Those who show this fear belong to that "high" (by capitalist standards, but actually *rotten*) "society" which utters the word "justice" without believing in it, from habit, as a trite phrase, attaching no meaning to it.

Here is an example.

Mr. Peshekhonov is a well-known semi-Cadet. A more moderate Trudovik, one of the same mind as the Breshkovskayas and Plekhanovs, will not be found. There has never been a minister more servile to the bourgeoisie. The world had never seen a more ardent advocate of "coalition", of compromise with the capitalists.

Here are the admissions this gentleman-was *forced* to make in his speech at the "Democratic" (read: Bulygin) Conference as reported by the defencist *Izvestia*:

> "There are two programmes. One is the programme of group claims, class and national claims. This programme is most frankly advocated by the Bolsheviks. It is not easy, however, for the other sections of the democracy to reject this programme. They are the claims of the working people, the claims of the cheated and oppressed nationalities. It is not so easy, therefore, for the democracy to break with the Bolsheviks, to reject these class demands, primarily because in essence these demands are just. But this programme, for which we fought before the revolution, for the sake of which we made the revolution, and which we would all unanimously support under other circumstances, constitutes a very grave danger under present conditions. The danger is all the greater now because these demands have to be presented at a time when it is impossible for the state to comply with them. We must first defend the whole—the state, to save it from doom, and there is only one way to do that, not the satisfaction of demands, however just and cogent they may be, but, on the contrary, restriction and sacrifice, which must be contributed from all quarters. (*Izvestia*, September 17.)

Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that as long as the capitalists are in power he is defending *not* the whole, but the selfish interests of Russian and "Allied" imperialist capital. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that the war would cease to be an imperialist, predatory war of annexation only after a rupture with the capitalists, with *their* secret treaties, with *their* annexations (seizure of alien territory), with *their* banking and financial swindles. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that only *after* this would the war become—if the enemy rejected the formal offer of

a just peace—a defensive war, a just war. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that the defence potential of a country that has thrown off the yoke of capital, that has given the peasants land and has placed the banks and factories under workers' control, would be many times greater than the defence potential of a capitalist country.

The main thing that. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand is that he surrenders his entire position, the entire position of the entire petty-bourgeois democracy when he is forced to admit the justice of Bolshevism, to admit that its demands are the demands of the "working people", i.e., of the majority of the people.

This is where our strength lies. This is why our government will be invincible; because even our opponents are forced to admit that the Bolshevik programme is that of the "working people" and the "oppressed nationalities".

After all, Mr. Peshekhonov is the political friend of the Cadets, of the Yedinstvo and Dyelo Naroda people, of the Breshkovskayas and Plekhanovs, he is the representative of the kulaks and of the gentlemen whose wives and sisters would come tomorrow to gouge out with their umbrellas the eyes of wounded Bolsheviks if they were to be defeated by Kornilov's or (which is the same thing) Kerensky's troops.

A gentleman like that is forced to admit the "justice" of the Bolshevik demands.

For him "justice" is merely an empty phrase. For the mass of semi-proletarians, however, and for the majority of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie who have been ruined, tortured and worn out by the war, it is not an empty phrase, but a most acute, most burning and immense question of death from starvation, of a crust of bread. That is why no policy can be based on a "coalition", on a "compromise" between the interests of the starving and ruined and the interests of the exploiters. That is why the Bolshevik government is assured of the support of the overwhelming majority of these people.

Justice is an empty word, say the intellectuals and those rascals who are inclined to proclaim themselves Marxists on the lofty grounds that they have "contemplated the hind parts" of economic materialism.

Ideas become a power when they grip the people. And precisely at the present time the Bolsheviks, i.e., the representatives of revolutionary proletarian internationalism, have embodied in their policy the idea that is motivating countless working people all over the world.

Justice alone, the mere anger of the people against exploitation, would never have brought them on to the true path of socialism. But now that, thanks to capitalism, the material apparatus of the big banks, syndicates, railways, and so forth, has grown, now that the immense experience of the advanced countries has accumulated a stock of engineering marvels, the employment of which is being *hindered* by capitalism, now that the class-conscious workers have built up a party of a quarter of a million members to systematically lay hold of this apparatus and set it in motion with the support of all the working and exploited people—now that these conditions exist, no power on earth can prevent the Bolsheviks, *if they do not allow themselves to be scared* and if they succeed in taking power, from retaining it until the triumph of the world socialist revolution.

AFTERWORD

The foregoing lines were already written when the leading article in *Novaya Zhizn* of October 1 produced another gem of stupidity which is all the more dangerous because it professes sympathy with the Bolsheviks and offers most sagacious philistine admonitions "not to allow yourselves to be provoked" (not to allow ourselves to be caught in the trap of screams about provocation, the object of which is to frighten the Bolsheviks and cause them to *refrain* from taking power).

Here is this gem:

> "The lessons of movements, like that of July 3-5, on the one hand, and of the Kornilov days, on the other, have shown quite clearly that the democracy, having at its command organs that exercise immense influence among the population, is invincible when it takes a defensive position in civil war, and that it suffers defeat, loses all the middle vacillating groups when it takes the initiative and launches an offensive."

If the Bolsheviks were to yield in any form and in the slightest degree to the philistine stupidity of this argument they would ruin their Party and the revolution.

For the author of this argument, taking it upon himself to talk about civil war (just the subject for a lady with many good points), has distorted *the lessons of history* on this question in an incredibly comical manner.

This is how *these* lessons, the lessons of history on *this* question, were treated by the representative and founder of proletarian revolutionary tactics, Karl Marx:

"Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other art, and is subject to certain procedural rules which,

when neglected, will bring about the downfall of the party neglecting them. These rules, logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances you have to deal with in such a case, are so plain and simple that the brief experience of 1848 made the Germans fairly well acquainted with them. Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to go the whole way [literally: face the consequences of your game].* "Insurrection is an equation with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organisation, discipline and habitual authority [Marx has in mind the most "difficult" case of insurrection: against the "firmly established" old authority, against the army not yet disintegrated by the influence of the revolution and the vacillation of the government]; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, once you have entered upon the insurrectionary career, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattered, prepare the way for new successes, however small, but prepare daily; keep up the moral superiority which the first successful rising has given to you; rally in this way those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary tactics yet known: *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace!*" (*Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany*, German edition, 1907, p. 118).

We have changed all that, the "would-be Marxists" of *Novaya Zhizn* may say about themselves; instead of triple audacity they have two virtues: "We have two, sir: moderation and accuracy."[61] For "us", the experience of world history, the experience of the Great French Revolution, is nothing. The important thing for "us" is the experience of the two movements in 1917, distorted by Molchalin spectacles.

* Interpolations in square brackets (within passages quoted by Lenin) have been introduced by Lenin unless otherwise indicated.—*Ed.*

Let us examine this experience without these charming spectacles.

You compare July 3-5 with "civil war", because you believed Alexinsky, Pereverzev and Co. It is typical of the gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn* that they believe *such* people (and do absolutely nothing themselves to *collect information* about July 3-5, although they have the huge apparatus of a big daily newspaper at their disposal).

Let us assume for a moment, however, that July 3-5 was not the rudiment of civil war that was kept within the rudimentary stage by the Bolsheviks, but actual civil war. Let us assume this.

In that case, then, what does this lesson prove?

First, the Bolsheviks did *not* take the offensive, for it is indisputable that on the night of July 3-4, and even on July 4, they would have gained a great deal if they had taken the offensive. Their defensive position was their weakness, if we are to speak of civil war (as *Novaya Zhizn* does, and not of converting a spontaneous outburst into a demonstration of the type of April 20-21, as the *facts* show).

The "lesson" therefore proves that the wise men of *Novaya Zhizn* are *wrong*.

Secondly, if the Bolsheviks did not even set out to start an insurrection on July 3 or 4, if *not a single* Bolshevik *body* even raised such a question, the reason for it lies *beyond* the scope of our controversy with *Novaya Zhizn*. For we are arguing about the *lessons* of "civil war", i.e., of insurrection, and not about the point that obvious lack of a majority to support it restrains the revolutionary party from thinking of insurrection.

Since everybody knows that the Bolsheviks received a majority in the metropolitan Soviets and in the country (over 49 per cent of the Moscow votes) *much later* than July 1917, it again follows that the "lessons" are far, far from what *Novaya Zhizn*, that lady with many good points, would like them to be.

No, no, you had better not meddle with politics, citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*!

If the revolutionary party has no majority in the advanced contingents of the revolutionary classes and in the country, insurrection is out of the question. Moreover, insurrection

requires: (1) growth of the revolution on a country-wide scale; (2) the complete moral and political bankruptcy of the old government, for example, the "coalition" government; (3) extreme vacillation in the camp of all middle groups, i.e., those who do *not* fully support the government, although they did fully support it yesterday.

Why did *Novaya Zhizn*, when speaking of the "lessons" of July 3-5, fail even to note this very important lesson? Because a political question was not dealt with by politicians but by a circle of intellectuals who had been terrified by the bourgeoisie.

To proceed. Thirdly, the facts show that it was *after* July 3-4 that the *rot* set in among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, precisely because the Tseretelis had *exposed* themselves by their *July* policy, precisely because the mass of the *people* realised that the Bolsheviks were *their own* front-rank fighters and that the "social-bloc" advocates were traitors. *Even before* the Kornilov revolt this rot was fully revealed by the Petrograd elections on August 20, which resulted in a victory for the Bolsheviks and the rout of the "social-bloc" advocates (*Dyelo Naroda* recently tried to refute this *by concealing* the returns for *all* parties, but this was both self-deception and deception of its readers; according to the figures published in *Dyen* of August 24, covering only the city, the Cadets' share of the total vote increased from 22 to 23 per cent, but the absolute number of votes cast for the Cadets dropped 40 per cent; the Bolsheviks' share of the total vote increased from 20 to 33 per cent, while the absolute number of votes cast for the Bolsheviks dropped only 10 per cent; the share of all "middle groups" dropped from 58 to 44 per cent, but the absolute number of votes cast for them dropped 60 per cent!).

That a rot had set in among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks after the July days and before the Kornilov days is also proved by the growth of the Left wings in both parties, reaching almost 40 per cent: this is "retribution" for the persecution of the Bolsheviks by the Kerenskys.

In spite of the "loss" of a few hundred members, the proletarian party *gained* enormously from July 3-4, for it was precisely during those stern days that the *people* real-

ised and saw its devotion and the *treachery* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. So, the "lesson" is far, very far from being of the *Novaya Zhizn* sort, it is one entirely different, namely: don't desert the seething masses for the "Molchalins of democracy"; and if you launch an insurrection, go over to the offensive while the enemy forces are scattered, catch the enemy unawares.

Is that not so, gentlemen "would-be Marxists" of *Novaya Zhizn*?

Or does "Marxism" mean *not* basing tactics on an exact appraisal of the *objective* situation but senselessly and uncritically lumping together "civil war" and "a Congress of Soviets and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly"?

But this is simply ridiculous, gentlemen, this is a sheer mockery of Marxism and of logic in general!

If there is *nothing* in the *objective* situation that warrants the intensification of the class struggle to the point of "civil war", why did you speak of "civil war" *in connection* with "a Congress of Soviets and the Constituent Assembly"? (For this is the title of the leading article in *Novaya Zhizn* here under discussion.) In that case you should clearly have told the reader and proved to him that there is *no* ground in the objective situation for civil war and that, therefore, peaceful, constitutionally-legal, juridically and parliamentarily "simple" things like a Congress of Soviets and a Constituent Assembly can and should be the cornerstone of tactics. In that case it is *possible* to hold the opinion that such a congress and such an assembly are really capable *of making decisions*.

If, however, the present objective conditions harbour the inevitability or even only the probability of civil war, if you did not "idly" speak about it, but did so clearly seeing, feeling, sensing the existence of a situation of civil war, how could you make a Congress of Soviets or a Constituent Assembly the cornerstone? This is a sheer mockery of the starving and tormented people! Do you think the starving will consent to "wait" two months? Or that the ruin, about the increase of which you yourselves write every day, will consent to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets or for the Constituent Assembly? Or that the German offensive, in the absence of serious steps on our part towards peace (i.e., in

the absence of a formal offer of a just peace to all belligerents), will consent to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets or for the Constituent Assembly? Or are you in possession of facts which permit you to conclude that the history of the Russian revolution, which from February 28 to September 30 had proceeded with extraordinary turbulence and unprecedented rapidity, will, from October 1 to November 29,[62] proceed at a super-tranquil, peaceful, legally balanced pace that will preclude upheavals, spurts, military defeats and economic crises? Or will the army at the front, concerning which the *non*-Bolshevik officer Dubasov said officially, in the name of the front, "it will not fight", quietly starve and freeze until the "appointed" date? Or will the peasant revolt cease to be a factor of civil war because you call it "anarchy" and "pogrom", or because Kerensky will send "military" forces *against the peasants*? Or is it possible, *conceivable*, that the government can work calmly, honestly, and *without* deception to convene the Constituent Assembly in a *peasant* country when that same government is *suppressing* the peasant revolt?

Don't laugh at the "confusion in the Smolny Institute",[63] gentlemen! There is no less confusion in your own ranks. You answer the formidable questions of civil war with confused phrases and pitiful constitutional illusions. That is why I say that if the Bolsheviks were to give in to these moods they would ruin both their Party and their revolution.

October 1, 1917. *N. Lenin*

TO WORKERS, PEASANTS, AND SOLDIERS!

Comrades! The Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, to which Kerensky belongs, appeals to you in its paper *Dyelo Naroda* (of September 30) "*to be patient*".

The paper asks us "to be patient" and urges that power be left in the hands of Kerensky's government, that power should not pass to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Let Kerensky rely on the landowners, capitalists and kulaks, let the Soviets that have carried through the revolution and vanquished the Kornilovite generals "be patient", we are told. Let them have patience until the Constituent Assembly, which will soon be convened.

Comrades! Look around you, see what is happening in the countryside, see what is happening in the army, and you will realise that the peasants and the soldiers cannot tolerate it any longer. *An uprising of the peasants* from whom the land has hitherto been withheld by fraud is sweeping like a broad river over the whole of Russia. The peasants cannot tolerate it any longer. Kerensky sends *troops* to suppress the peasants and to defend the landowners. Kerensky has again come to an agreement with the Kornilovite generals and officers who stand for the landowners.

Neither the workers in the cities nor the soldiers at the front can tolerate this military suppression of the just struggle of the peasants for the land.

As to what is going on in the army at the front, Dubasov, a non-Party officer, has declared before all of Russia: "The soldiers will not fight any longer." The soldiers are tired out, the soldiers are barefooted, the soldiers are starving, the soldiers do not want to fight for the interests of the capital-

ists, they do not want to "*be patient*" when they are treated only to beautiful words about peace, while for months there has been a delay (as Kerensky is delaying it) in the *peace proposal*, the proposal for a just peace without annexations, to be offered to *all* the belligerent peoples.

Comrades! Know that Kerensky is again negotiating with the Kornilovite generals and officers to *lead troops against the Soviets* of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, to *prevent* the Soviets *from obtaining power*! Kerensky "*will under no circumstances submit*" to the Soviets, *Dyelo Naroda* openly admits.

Go, then, to the barracks, go to the Cossack units, go to the working people and explain the *truth* to them.

If power is in the hands of the Soviets, then not later than October 25 (if the Congress of Soviets opens on October 20) *a just peace will be offered* to all the belligerent peoples. There will be *a workers' and peasants' government* in Russia; it will *immediately*, without losing a single day, *offer a just peace to all the belligerent peoples*. Then the people will learn who wants the unjust war. Then in the Constituent Assembly the people will decide.

If power is in the hands of the Soviets, the *landowners'* estates will *immediately* be declared the *inalienable property of the whole people*.

This is what Kerensky and his government fight against, relying on the village exploiters, capitalists and landowners!

This is for whom and for whose interests you are asked to "be patient".

Are you willing to "be patient" in order that Kerensky may use armed force to suppress the peasants who have risen for land?

Are you willing to "be patient" in order that *the war may be dragged out longer, in order that the offer* of peace and the annulling of the former tsar's secret treaties with the Russian and Anglo-French capitalists may be postponed?

Comrades, remember that Kerensky deceived the people once when he promised to convene the Constituent Assembly! On July 8 he solemnly promised to convene it not later than September 17, and he has *deceived the people*. Comrades! Whoever believes in the Kerensky government is a traitor to his brothers, the peasants and soldiers!

No, *not for one more day* are the people willing to suffer postponement . *Not for a single day longer* can we suffer the peasants to be suppressed by armed force, thousands upon thousands to perish in the war, when *a just peace* can and must be *offered* at once.

Down with the government of Kerensky, who is conniving with the Kornilovite landowning generals to suppress the peasants, to fire on the peasants, to drag out the war!

All power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!

Written October 1-2 (14-15), 1917

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LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, THE MOSCOW AND PETROGRAD COMMITTEES AND THE BOLSHEVIK MEMBERS OF THE PETROGRAD AND MOSCOW SOVIETS[64]

Dear Comrades,

Events are prescribing our task so clearly for us that procrastination is becoming positively *criminal*.

The peasant movement is developing. The government is intensifying its severe repressive measures. Sympathy for us is growing in the army (99 per cent of the soldiers' votes were cast for us in Moscow, the army in Finland and the fleet are against the government, and there is Dubasov's evidence about the front in general).

In Germany the beginning of a revolution is obvious, especially since the sailors were shot. The elections in Moscow—47 per cent Bolsheviks—are a tremendous victory. Together with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries we have an *obvious* majority *in the country*.

The railway and postal employees are in conflict with the government. Instead of calling the Congress for October 20, the Lieberdans are already talking of calling it at the end of October, etc., etc.

Under such circumstances to "wait" would be a crime.

The Bolsheviks have no right to wait for the Congress of Soviets, they must *take power at once*. By so doing they will save the world revolution (for otherwise there is danger of a deal between the imperialists of all countries, who, after the shootings in Germany, will be more accommodating to each other and *will unite against us*), the Russian revolution (otherwise a wave of real anarchy may become stronger *than we are*) and the lives of hundreds of thousands of people at the front.

Delay is criminal. To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, a disgraceful game of formalities, and a betrayal of the revolution.

If power cannot be achieved without insurrection, we must *resort to insurrection at once.* It may very well be that right now power can be achieved without insurrection, for example, if the Moscow Soviet were to take power at once, immediately, and proclaim itself (together with the Petrograd Soviet) the government. Victory in Moscow is guaranteed, and there is no need to fight. Petrograd can wait. The government cannot do anything to save itself; it will surrender.

For, by seizing power and taking over the banks, the factories and *Russkoye Slovo*, the Moscow Soviet would secure a tremendous basis and tremendous strength, it would be able to campaign throughout Russia and raise the issue thus: we shall propose *peace tomorrow* if the Bonapartist Kerensky surrenders (and if he does not, we shall overthrow him). We shall hand over the *land* to the peasants *at once*, we shall make concessions to the railway and postal employees *at once*, and so on.

It is not necessary to "begin" with Petrograd. If Moscow "begins" without any blood being shed, it will certainly be supported by (1) the army at the front by its sympathy, (2) the peasants everywhere and (3) the fleet and the troops in Finland, which will *proceed to Petrograd.*

Even if Kerensky has a corps or two of mounted troops near Petrograd, he will be obliged to surrender. The Petrograd Soviet can wait and campaign for the Moscow Soviet Government. The slogan is: Power to the Soviets, Land to the Peasants, Peace to the Nations, Bread to the Starving!

Victory is certain, and the chances are ten to one that it will be a bloodless victory.

To wait would be a crime to the revolution.

Greetings, *N. Lenin*

Written October 1 (14), 1917

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THESES FOR A REPORT AT THE OCTOBER 8 CONFERENCE OF THE PETROGRAD ORGANISATION, ALSO FOR A RESOLUTION AND INSTRUCTIONS TO THOSE ELECTED TO THE PARTY CONGRESS[65]

ON THE QUESTION OF THE PARTY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-PARLIAMENT

1. The participation of our Party in the Pre-parliament, in the Democratic Council, or in the Council of the Republic is an obvious error and a deviation from the proletarian revolutionary path.

2. The objective situation is such that a revolution against Kerensky's Bonapartist government is undoubtedly fomenting in the country (peasant uprising, increasing dissatisfaction and conflicts with the government in the army and among non-Russian groups, conflict with railway and postal employees, the resounding defeat of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary conciliators at the elections, etc.).

At a time when there is such an upsurge of the revolution, to go to a sham parliament decked out to deceive the people is to facilitate this deception, make the preparation for the revolution *more difficult*, and distract the attention of the people and the forces of the Party from the urgent task of the struggle for power and for the overthrow of the government.

3. The Party congress, therefore, must recall Party members from the Pre-parliament, declare a boycott of it, appeal to the people to prepare forces for dispersing this "Bulygin Duma" of Tsereteli's.

ON THE SLOGAN "ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS"

1. All the six months' work of the Bolsheviks in the revolution, all the criticism levelled by them against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries for their "conciliationism" and for their having turned the Soviets into talking-shops, demand on the part of the Bolsheviks a loyal adherence to this slogan in a straightforward Marxist way. Unfortunately, vacillations are to be noted at the top levels of our Party, a "fear", as it were, of the struggle for power, a tendency to substitute resolutions, protests, and congresses for this struggle.

2. All the experience of both revolutions, that of 1905 and that of 1917, and all the decisions of the Bolshevik Party, all its political declarations for many years, may be reduced to the concept that the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is a reality only as an organ of insurrection, as an organ of revolutionary power. Apart from this, the Soviets are a meaningless plaything that can only produce apathy, indifference and disillusion among the masses, who are legitimately disgusted at the endless repetition of resolutions and protests.

3. Particularly today, when a peasant uprising is sweeping the country and is being suppressed by Kerensky with the aid of picked troops, when even the military measures in the rural areas constitute an obvious threat that the elections to the Constituent Assembly will be rigged, when even in Germany there has been a mutiny in the fleet, a refusal on the part of the Bolsheviks to transform the Soviets into organs of insurrection would be a betrayal both of the peasants and of the cause of the world socialist revolution.

4. The problem of the seizure of power by the Soviets is that of a successful uprising. That is why all the best forces of the Party must be sent to the factories and barracks to explain to the masses their task and, taking their mood correctly in account, choose the proper moment for overthrowing the Kerensky government.

To insist on connecting this task with the Congress of Soviets, to subordinate it to this Congress, means *to be merely playing at insurrection* by setting a definite date beforehand, by making it easier for the government to

prepare troops, by confusing the masses with the illusion that a "resolution" of the Congress of Soviets can solve a task which only the insurrectionary proletariat is capable of solving by force.

5. It is necessary to fight against constitutional illusions and hopes placed in the Congress of Soviets, to discard the preconceived idea that we absolutely must "wait" for it, to concentrate all efforts on explaining to the masses the inevitability of an uprising, and on preparing it. With the Soviets of both capital cities in their hands the Bolsheviks would be reducing all their propaganda for the Power-to-the-Soviets slogan to empty phrases and, politically, would be covering themselves with shame as a party of the revolutionary proletariat if they refused to carry out this task, and if they became reconciled to the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (which means a faked Constituent Assembly) by the Kerensky government.

6. This is particularly true now, when the Moscow elections have given the Bolsheviks 49.5 per cent of the votes and when the Bolsheviks, with the support of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, which has long existed in reality, have an undoubted majority in the country.

NOTE TO THE RESOLUTION ON POWER TO THE SOVIETS

Not everything in the Theses on Power to the Soviets should be published, but it is tantamount to the Party's losing its connections with the vanguard of the proletariat, if we refuse to discuss within the Party and to make clear to the masses those most urgent and important problems that cannot be discussed in the open due to the absence of full freedom of the press, or that cannot be brought out openly before the enemy.

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LETTER TO THE PETROGRAD CITY CONFERENCE

TO BE READ IN CLOSED SESSION

Comrades,

Permit me to call the attention of the Conference to the extreme seriousness of the political situation. I base my opinion on the news in the Saturday morning papers alone. That news, however, compels me to raise the question in this way.

The absolute inaction of the British fleet in general, and also of British submarines during the occupation of Esel by the Germans, coupled with the government's plan to move from Petrograd to Moscow—does not all this prove that the Russian and British imperialists, Kerensky and the Anglo-French capitalists, *have conspired* to surrender Petrograd to the Germans and *thus* stifle the Russian revolution?

I think it does.

Perhaps there was no direct conspiracy, but an agreement reached through some Kornilovites (Maklakov or other Cadets, "non-party" Russian millionaires, etc.), but this does not in any way change the nature of it.

The conclusion is clear.

We must admit that unless the Kerensky government is overthrown by the proletariat and the soldiers in the near future the revolution is ruined. The question of an uprising is on the order of the day.

We must mobilise all forces to convince the workers and soldiers that it is absolutely imperative to wage a last, desperate and decisive fight for the overthrow of the Kerensky government.

We must appeal to the Moscow comrades, persuade them to seize power in Moscow, declare the Kerensky government deposed, and declare the Soviet of Workers' Deputies in Moscow the provisional government of Russia in order to offer immediate peace and save Russia from the conspiracy. Let the Moscow comrades raise the question of the uprising in Moscow immediately.

We must use the opportunity offered by the Congress of the Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies of the Northern Region,[66] called for October 8 in Helsingfors, and mobilise all our forces to win the delegates over for the uprising (as they go back through Petrograd).

We must put the request and proposal to the Central Committee of our Party that it hasten the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-parliament and devote all efforts to exposing to the masses Kerensky's conspiracy with the imperialists of other countries and to preparing the uprising so that the right *moment* for it is chosen.

P.S. The resolution of the *soldiers*' section of the Petrograd Soviet against moving the government from Petrograd[67] shows that the soldiers are also becoming *more* convinced of Kerensky's conspiracy. We must gather all forces to support this *correct* conviction and to carry on propaganda among the soldiers.

* * *

I move that the following resolution be adopted:

"The Conference, having discussed the present situation, which is generally admitted to be highly critical, establishes the following facts:

"1. The aggressive operations of the German fleet, accompanied by the very strange inactivity of the British fleet and coupled with the Provisional Government's plan to move from Petrograd to Moscow, arouse a very strong suspicion that the government of Kerensky (or, what is the same thing, the Russian imperialists behind him) have entered into a conspiracy with the Anglo-French imperialists to surrender Petrograd to the Germans and *in this way* to suppress the revolution.

"2. These suspicions are greatly strengthened, and are being confirmed, as far as is possible in such cases, by the following:

"First, the conviction has long been growing and strengthening in the army that it was betrayed by the tsarist generals and is also being betrayed by the generals of Kornilov and Kerensky (particularly in the surrender of Riga);

"Second, the Anglo-French bourgeois press does not conceal its fierce, even frenzied hatred for the Soviets and its readiness to drown them in any quantity of blood;

"Third, Kerensky, the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov and similar politicians are conscious or unconscious tools in the hands of Anglo-French imperialism, as six months' history of the Russian revolution has proved in full;

"Fourth, the vague but persistent rumours of a separate peace between Britain and Germany 'at the expense of Russia' could not have arisen without cause;

"Fifth, all the circumstances of the Kornilov conspiracy, as admitted even by *Dyelo Naroda* and *Izvestia*, papers that on the whole sympathise with Kerensky, have proved that Kerensky was to a very large extent mixed up in the Kornilov affair, that Kerensky was and is the most dangerous Kornilovite; Kerensky, in fact, has shielded such leaders of the Kornilov revolt as Rodzyanko, Klembovsky, Maklakov, and others.

"The Conference, therefore, recognises that all the shouting by Kerensky and the bourgeois papers that support him about the defence of Petrograd is sheer deception and hypocrisy, and the soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet was perfectly right when it sharply condemned the plan to move from Petrograd; furthermore, that Petrograd cannot be defended and the revolution saved unless the tired army is absolutely and urgently convinced of the sincerity of the government and is given bread, clothing and footwear at the cost of revolutionary measures against the capitalists, who hitherto have sabotaged the struggle against economic ruin (as admitted even by the Economic Department of the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary Central Executive Committee).

"The Conference therefore declares that only the overthrow of the Kerensky government with its packed Council of the Republic, and the substitution for it of a workers' and peasants revolutionary government, can ensure:

"(a) the transfer of the land to the peasants instead of suppressing the peasant uprising;

"(b) the offer of an immediate and just peace so that our entire army will believe that truth exists;

"(c) adoption of the most decisive revolutionary measures against the capitalists in order to provide the army with bread, clothing and footwear and in order to fight against economic ruin.

"The Conference urgently requests the Central Committee to take all measures to lead the inevitable uprising of the workers, soldiers and peasants for the overthrow of the anti-popular, feudal Kerensky government.

"The Conference decides on the immediate dispatch of delegations to Helsingfors, Vyborg, Kronstadt and Revel, to the military units south of Petrograd, and also to Moscow, to carry on propaganda in favour of adopting this resolution and in favour of a swift, general uprising and the overthrow of Kerensky as the steps necessary to open the road to peace, to save Petrograd and the revolution, and to give the land to the peasants and power to the Soviets."

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REVISION OF THE PARTY PROGRAMME

Written October 6-8 (19-21), 1917
Published in October 1917 in the journal *Prosveshcheniye* No. 1-2
Signed: N. Lenin

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The extraordinary congress of the Party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks), called by the Central Committee for October 17, has on the agenda the revision of the Party programme. The Conference of April 24-29[68] passed a resolution on the necessity for such a revision and indicated in eight points the direction which this revision should follow.* Then, later, pamphlets were published in Petrograd** and Moscow,*** which took up the question of revision, and on August 10 the Moscow journal *Spartak*[69] No. 4 published an article by Comrade N. I. Bukharin devoted to the same subject.

Let us examine the points raised by the Moscow comrades.

I

For the Bolsheviks, who all agree on the need to "evaluate imperialism and the epoch of imperialist wars in connection with the approaching socialist revolution" (Clause 1 of the resolution adopted by the Conference of April 24-29), the main question in the revision of the Party programme is that of formulating a new programme. Should we round out the old programme by adding a characterisation of imperi-

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* See present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 280-81.—*Ed.*

** *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme*, edited and with a preface by N. Lenin, *Priboi* Publishers, 1917.

*** *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme.* Collection of articles by V. Milyutin V. Sokolnikov, A. Lomov, V. Smirnov. Published by the Regional Bureau of the Moscow Industrial District of the R.S.D.L.P., 1917.

alism (I advocated this opinion in the Petrograd pamphlet), or should we change the whole text of the old programme? (This opinion was expressed by the group which was formed at the April Conference, and is now being advocated by the Moscow comrades.) This is primarily the question confronting our Party.

We have two drafts. The one I proposed complements the old programme by adding a characterisation of imperialism*; the second, proposed by Comrade V. Sokolnikov, and based on the remarks of a committee of three (this committee was elected by the group formed at the April Conference), changes the entire general part of the programme.

I also had occasion to express my opinion (in the abovementioned pamphlet, p. 11**) concerning the theoretical incorrectness of the plan of revision indicated by the group. Let us see now how this plan is carried out in Comrade Sokolnikov's draft.

Comrade Sokolnikov has divided the general part of our programme into ten sections, giving each a number (see pp. 11-18 of the Moscow pamphlet). We will adhere to his numerical scheme so as to enable the reader to find the relevant passages.

The first section of the present programme consists of two clauses. The first declares that the labour movement has become international because of the development of exchange; the second, that the Russian Social-Democratic Party considers itself one of the contingents of the army of the world proletariat. (Further on in the second section the common ultimate aim of all Social-Democrats is mentioned.)

Comrade Sokolnikov leaves the second clause intact, while he replaces the first by a new one, adding to the point about the development of exchange an allusion to the "export of capital" and the growth of the struggle of the proletariat into "a world-wide socialist revolution".

The immediate result is inconsistency, a mixture of subjects, a confusion of two *types* of programme structure. One of the two: *either* we must begin with the characterisation of imperialism *as a whole*—and in that case we must

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* See present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 459-60 and 469.—*Ed.*
** Ibid., pp. 464-65.—*Ed.*

not single out only the "export of capital", or leave in, as Comrade Sokolnikov does, the analysis of "the process of development" of bourgeois society in the *second* section; *or* we must leave the type of programme structure unchanged, i.e., first explain why our movement has become international, what its common ultimate goal is, how the "process of development" of bourgeois society is leading to this goal.

To make the inconsistency and lack of logic in Comrade Sokolnikov's formulation of the programme more evident, we will quote in full the opening sentences of the old programme:

"The development of exchange has established such close ties between all the nations of the civilised world that the great movement of the proletariat towards emancipation was bound to become—and has long since become—international."

Here Comrade Sokolnikov is dissatisfied with two points—(1) speaking of the development of exchange, the programme describes an antiquated "period of development"; (2) after the word "civilised" he puts an exclamation mark and says that "the close ties between metropolis and colony" are "not taken cognisance of" in our programme.

"Can protectionism, tariff wars, imperialist wars sever the ties of the proletarian movement?" queries Comrade Sokolnikov? and he himself answers: "If we are to believe the text of our programme, they can, for they sever the ties established by exchange."

Rather strange criticism. Neither protectionism, nor tariff wars "sever" exchange; they only change it temporarily or interrupt it at one point, permitting its continuation at another. Exchange has not been eliminated by the present war, it has only been made difficult in some places and has shifted to other places, but it still *remains* an international tie. The most obvious proof is the course of exchange. This is the first point. And secondly, we read in Comrade Sokolnikov's draft: "The development of productive forces, which, on the basis of the exchange of goods and the export of capital, draws all peoples into one world economy", etc. Imperialist war (in one place, for a time) also interrupts the export of capital, as well as exchange; therefore, Comrade Sokolnikov's "criticism" may be turned against *him*.

Thirdly, the old programme showed why the labour movement "*has long since become*" international. It had unquestionably become international before the export of capital, which is the highest stage of capitalism.

To sum up: Comrade Sokolnikov inserted a *bit* of the definition of imperialism (the export of capital) in a place where it is obviously *incongruous*.

Moreover, the words "the civilised world" do not appeal to Comrade Sokolnikov, for, in his opinion, they refer to something peaceful and harmonious, and leave the colonies out.

Quite the contrary. Speaking of the "civilised world", the programme points out the *dis*harmony, the existence of uncivilised countries (this is a *fact*), while in Comrade Sokolnikov's draft things appear *much more harmonious*, for it speaks simply of "drawing all peoples into one world economy"! As if all peoples were *equally* drawn into this one world economy! As if there existed no relationship of *bondage* between the uncivilised and the "civilised" peoples precisely *on the basis* of "all peoples" being drawn "into one world economy".

Comrade Sokolnikov has really *weakened* the old programme on the two points he mentions. He has put *less* emphasis on internationalism. It is very important for us to point out that it emerged *long ago*, long before the era of finance capital. His wording gives the impression of a *greater* "harmony" in respect of the colonies. It is nevertheless unfortunately true that so far the labour movement has affected *only* the civilised countries, and to ignore this fact is not proper.

I would be ready to agree with Comrade Sokolnikov had he demanded a *clearer* exposition of the exploitation of the colonies. That is a really *important* component of the concept "imperialism". But in the first section of Comrade Sokolnikov's draft, there is no mention of it. He *scatters* the various component parts of the concept "imperialism" over several places to the detriment of consistency and clarity.

We shall soon see how Comrade Sokolnikov's *entire* draft suffers from this looseness and inconsistency.

II

Let the reader observe the general arrangement and the sequence of *topics* in the various sections of the old programme (we follow Comrade Sokolnikov's numerical scheme):

1. The labour movement has long since become international. We are one of its contingents.

2. The final goal of the movement is determined by the course of development of bourgeois society. The point of departure is that the means of production are privately owned and the proletariat is propertyless.

3. The growth of capitalism. The crowding out of the small producers.

4. The growth of exploitation (female labour, the reserve labour army, etc.).

5. Crises.

6. The progress of technology; the growth of inequality.

7. Growing struggle on the part of the proletariat. Material conditions for the replacement of capitalism by socialism.

8. The proletarian social revolution.

9. Its premise—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

10. The task of the Party—to lead the struggle of the proletariat for the social revolution.

I add another point:

11. Capitalism has developed to its highest stage (imperialism), and the era of the proletarian revolution has now set in.

Compare this with the arrangement of the *subject matter*—not the individual corrections to the text, but the subject matter itself—in Comrade Sokolnikov's draft, and also the *points he adds on imperialism.*

1. The labour movement is international. We are one of its contingents. (Inserted—the export of capital, world economy, the growth of the struggle into the world revolution; i.e., a bit of the definition of imperialism is inserted.)

2. The final goal of the movement is determined by the course of development of bourgeois society. The point of departure is that the means of production are privately owned and the proletariat is propertyless. (In the middle is inserted: omnipotent banks and syndicates, monopoly

combines on a world scale; i.e., another bit of the definition of imperialism is inserted.)

3. The growth of capitalism. The crowding out of the small producers.

4. The growth of exploitation (female labour, the reserve labour army, foreign workers, etc.).

5. Crises and wars. Still another bit of the definition of imperialism is inserted: "attempts to partition the globe"; monopoly associations and the export of capital are repeated once more; the term "finance capital" is explained parenthetically as meaning "the product of a merger of industrial and banking capital".

6. The progress of technology; the growth of inequality. Yet another bit of the definition of imperialism is put in: high cost of living, militarism. Monopoly associations are mentioned again.

7. Growing struggle on the part of the proletariat. Material conditions for the replacement of capitalism by socialism. In the middle there is an interpolation, again reiterating: "monopoly capitalism", and pointing out how the banks and the syndicates have prepared the apparatus for social regulation, etc.

8. The proletarian social revolution. (A note that it will put an end to the rule of finance capital.)

9. Its premise—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

10. The task of the Party—to lead the struggle of the proletariat for the social revolution. (In the middle there is an interpolation that the latter is now on the order of the day.)

I believe that this comparative study clearly shows that Comrade Sokolnikov's draft suffers from the "mechanical" additions some comrades were so afraid of. Without any logical sequence, various bits of the definition of imperialism have been scattered throughout the draft in the form of a mosaic. There is no general and integral characterisation of imperialism. There are too many repetitions. The old canvas is preserved. Preserved also is the general plan of the old programme which points out that the "ultimate goal" of the movement is "determined" by the nature of contemporary bourgeois society and *the course of its development*. But it is just this "course of development" which is not brought out;

and the effect is that odds and ends of the definition of imperialism have been inserted, mostly *inappropriately*.

Let us take the second section. Here Comrade Sokolnikov left unchanged the beginning and the end; the beginning states that the means of production are in the hands of a minority; the end, that the majority of the population are proletarians or semi-proletarians. *Right in the middle*, Comrade Sokolnikov inserts a special phrase to the effect that "during the last quarter of a century the direct or indirect control of production organised on capitalist lines has passed into the hands of all-powerful" banks, trusts, etc.

This is mentioned *earlier* than the *crowding out of the small by the big producers*! The latter fact is first mentioned in the *third* section. But are not trusts the highest and latest manifestation of the very process of the crowding out of small-scale by large-scale production? Is it appropriate to speak first of trusts, and then of the ousting of the small producer? Is it not a violation of logical sequence? Where, then, did the trusts come from? Is this not an error in theory? How and why has control "passed" into their hands? All this cannot be understood before the process of the ousting of the small producer is made clear.

Let us take the third section that deals with the crowding out of small by large enterprises. Here too Comrade Sokolnikov retains the beginning (the increasing importance of big enterprises) and the end (small producers are being crowded out). In the middle, however, he adds that big enterprises "have merged into gigantic organisms which combine a series of consecutive steps of production and exchange". But this insertion deals with an entirely different matter, namely, the concentration of the means of production and the socialisation of labour by capitalism, the creation of the material conditions for the replacement of capitalism by socialism. In the old programme this point is not dealt with until the seventh section.

Comrade Sokolnikov adheres to the general plan of the old programme. He, too, speaks of the material conditions for the replacement of capitalism by socialism *only in the seventh section*. He also retains in the seventh section a mention of the concentration of means of production and the socialisation of labour!

And so the concentration of capital is indicated in part a few paragraphs *before* an entire general, summarising section specially devoted to the subject. This is devoid of all logic and is likely to render the programme less intelligible to the masses.

III

Comrade Sokolnikov "subjects to a general revision" the fifth section of the programme, the one dealing with crises. He finds that the old programme "sins in theory to win popularity" and "deviates from Marx's theory of crises".

Comrade Sokolnikov suggests that the word "overproduction" is made "the basis of the explanation" of crises in the old programme and that "such a view is more in keeping with the theory of Rodbertus[70] who explains crises as being due to under-consumption by the working class".

A comparison of the old text with the new one proposed by Comrade Sokolnikov will show how unsuccessful his hunt for theoretical heresy has been, and how Rodbertus has been dragged in *by the hair*.

The old text contains the following, *after* mention (in the fourth section) of "technical progress", intensified exploitation of labour, and relatively lower consumption by the workers: "*This* state of affairs in the bourgeois countries, etc., makes it more and more difficult for them to market commodities produced in ever-increasing quantities. *Overproduction*, manifesting itself in ... crises ... and periods of stagnation ... is an inevitable consequence...."

It is clear that here overproduction is by no means used as the "basis of the explanation" of crises, but that this is only a *description* of the origin of crises and periods of stagnation. In Comrade Sokolnikov's draft we read the following:

> "The development of the productive forces assuming these contradictory forms, in which the conditions of production come into conflict with the conditions of consumption and the conditions for the realisation of capital with those for its accumulation—this development, whose sole motive force is the pursuit of profit, has as its inevitable consequence acute industrial crises and depressions which signify the cessation of the sale of commodities, anarchically produced in ever-increasing quantities."

Comrade Sokolnikov said exactly the same thing, because "the cessation of the sale of commodities" produced in "ever-increasing quantities", is exactly what we call *overproduction*. There is no need for him to fear this word, there is nothing inaccurate in it. It is useless for Comrade Sokolnikov to write that instead of "overproduction", "underproduction might be used, with much the same or even more reason" (page 15 of the Moscow pamphlet).

Well, just try calling the "cessation of the sale of commodities", "produced in ever-increasing quantities", "underproduction"! It cannot be done.

Rodbertus's theory is not merely a matter of using the word "overproduction" (which alone *exactly describes* one of the profoundest *contradictions* of capitalism), but of explaining crises *merely* as the result of insufficient consumption by the working class. The old programme does *not* deduce crises from insufficient consumption. It bases its explanation on "*this* state of affairs in the bourgeois countries", as has been described in the preceding section of the programme and which consists in "technical progress" and "the relatively lower demand for human labour-power". Alongside of this the old programme speaks of "the ever-growing competition on the world market".

Here something *basic* is said about the conflict between the conditions for accumulation and the conditions for realisation, and is said much *more clearly*. The theory has not been "changed" here at all, "to win popularity", as Comrade Sokolnikov erroneously thinks, but is presented clearly and popularly, which is a good point.

Of crises, to be sure, one could write volumes, one might give a more concrete analysis of the conditions of accumulation, mention the role of the *means of production*, of the exchange of surplus value and variable capital expressed in the means of production for constant capital expressed in articles of consumption, of the depreciation of constant capital due to new inventions, and so on, and so forth. But Comrade Sokolnikov makes no attempt to do this! His supposed correction of the programme consists only in the following:

1. Having preserved the plan of transition from the fourth to the fifth section, from the reference to technical progress,

etc., to crises, he *weakened the connection* between the two sections by leaving out the words, "*this* state of affairs".

2. He added theoretical-sounding phrases about the conflict between the conditions of production and the conditions of consumption, and between the conditions for realisation and the conditions for accumulation—phrases which are quite correct but which do not express any new idea, for the preceding section gives the substance of all this more clearly.

3. He adds "the pursuit of profit"—an expression hardly suited to the programme, and which is used here, we suspect, precisely "*to win* popularity", for *the same idea* is expressed several times in the phrases about "conditions for realisation", commodity production, etc.

4. He substitutes "depression" for "stagnation"; an unfortunate change.

5. He adds the word "anarchically" to the old text ("commodities, anarchically produced in ever-increasing quantities"). This addition is theoretically wrong, for "anarchy" or "absence of planning" using an expression from the Erfurt Programme and contested by Engels, does *not* exactly characterise trusts.*

Here is how Comrade Sokolnikov puts it:

"Commodities are anarchically produced in ever-increasing quantities. Efforts of capitalist associations (trusts and the like) to prevent crises by limiting production end in failure," etc.

But it is by trusts that commodities are *not* produced anarchically, but according to a plan. Trusts *do not merely* "limit" production. They do not make any *efforts* to prevent crises, nor can they make any such "efforts". Comrade Sokolnikov is guilty of a number of inaccuracies. What he should have said was: although trusts produce commodities not anarchically but according to a plan, crises nevertheless cannot be averted because of the above-mentioned characteristics of capitalism which are also inherent in the trusts. And if trusts, in periods of the greatest prosperity and speculation, limit production in the sense of being careful "not to

* Engels criticised the expressions "private production" and "absence of planning" in the draft of the Erfurt Programme. He wrote: "If we go over from stock companies to trusts, which dominate and monopolise whole branches of industry, not only private production, but also the absence of planning comes to an end."[71]

go too far", then at best they only succeed in saving the largest enterprises; but crises come just the same.

Summarising all that has been said on the question of crises, we come to the conclusion that Comrade Sokolnikov has *not* improved upon the old programme. On the contrary, the new draft contains inaccuracies. The need to correct the old programme has not been proved.

IV

In his draft Comrade Sokolnikov makes two theoretical errors on the question of wars of an imperialist nature.

First, he does not give an appreciation of the present war. He says that the imperialist epoch generates imperialist wars. This is correct and should, of course, be stated in the programme. But this is not enough. Besides this it is necessary to say that the present war of 1914-17 is imperialist. The German Spartacus group in their "theses" published in German in 1915 advanced the proposition that in an era of imperialism national wars *are impossible*.[72] This is obviously a wrong assertion, for imperialism makes the oppression of nations more acute and, as a result, national revolts and national wars (attempts to draw a line of demarcation between revolts and wars are doomed to failure) are not only possible and probable but absolutely inevitable.

Marxism demands a very precise assessment of each separate war on the basis of concrete data. To evade the question of the present war by resorting to general discussions is wrong in theory and inadmissible in practice. This method is used as a screen by the opportunists, they use it for evasion. They say that imperialism is, in general, an epoch of imperialist wars, but *this particular* war is *not wholly* imperialist (thus argued, for instance, Kautsky).

Secondly, Comrade Sokolnikov *links* "crises and wars", as if they were a two-in-one companion of capitalism in general, and of modern capitalism in particular. On pages 20 and 21 of the Moscow pamphlet, he repeats the "crises and wars" combination in his draft *three times*. Here it is not only a question of the undesirability of repetitions in the programme. It is also a question of incorrectness in principle.

Crises in the shape of overproduction, or "cessation of the sale of commodities", if Comrade Sokolnikov insists on banishing the word overproduction, are phenomena *exclusive* to capitalism. But wars are also characteristic of the slave-owning and serf systems of economy. Imperialist wars also occurred in the period of slavery (the war between Rome and Carthage was on both sides an imperialist war), as well as in the Middle Ages and in the epoch of mercantile capitalism. A war is certainly imperialist if *both* warring sides oppress foreign countries or nationalities, and are fighting for their share of the loot and for the right to "oppress and rob" more than the others.

If we were to say that only modern capitalism, only imperialism, has brought imperialist wars in its wake, it would be correct, for the *preceding* stage of capitalism, the stage of free competition, or the stage of pre-monopoly capitalism, was characterised in Western Europe mainly by *national* wars. But if we were to say that in the preceding stage there were no imperialist wars at all, it would be incorrect. It would mean that we had forgotten the "colonial" wars, which are *also* imperialist. This is the first point.

And secondly, the *linking up* of "crises and wars" is particularly incorrect, for these are quite different phenomena of different historical origin and different class significance. For instance, it would be wrong to say, as Comrade Sokolnikov says in his draft, that "both crises and wars, in turn, mean still greater ruin for the small producers and increase the dependence of hired labour on capital. . .". For there could *possibly* be wars fought for the emancipation of hired labour from capital. In the course of the struggle of wage-workers against the capitalist class, wars of a revolutionary and not only of a reactionary-imperialist nature are possible. War is the continuation of the politics of this *or* that class; and in every class society, slave-owning, feudal, or capitalist, there have been wars which continued the politics of the oppressor classes and also wars which continued the politics of the oppressed classes. This is exactly why it would be wrong to say, as Comrade Sokolnikov does, that "crises and wars show that the capitalist system is changing from a form of the development of productive forces into a hindrance to it".

It is true that the present imperialist war, by its reactionary character and the hardships it entails, revolutionises the masses and accelerates the revolution, and this must be stated. It is also true that imperialist wars in general are *typical* of an imperialist epoch, and this may be mentioned. But it would be wrong to say this about all "wars" in general, and, moreover, under no circumstances should crises and wars be tied up together.

V

We must draw our conclusions on the chief question which should, according to the unanimous decision of all Bolsheviks, be primarily dealt with and assessed in the new programme—the question of *imperialism*. Comrade Sokolnikov maintains that such treatment and assessment could be more expediently given piecemeal, so to speak, dividing up the various characteristics of imperialism among various sections of the programme. I think it would be more to the purpose to present it in a special section or a special part of the programme, by gathering together everything that there is to say about imperialism. The members of the Party now have both drafts before them, and the congress will decide. We are in full accord with Comrade Sokolnikov in that imperialism must be dealt with. What we must find out is whether there are differences of opinion as to *how* imperialism should be treated and assessed.

From this point of view let us examine the two drafts of the new programme. In my draft five basic distinguishing features of imperialism are presented: (1) capitalist monopoly associations; (2) the fusion of banking and industrial capital; (3) the export of capital to foreign countries; (4) the territorial partition of the globe, already completed; (5) the partition of the globe among international economic trusts. (In my pamphlet *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, which came out after the *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme*, these five distinguishing features of imperialism are cited on p. 85.*) In Comrade Sokolnikov's draft we actually find the same five basic features, so that on the question of imperialism there is appar-

* See present edition, Vol. 22, p. 266.—*Ed.*

ently complete agreement in principle within our Party—as was to be expected, for the practical propaganda of our Party on this question, both oral and printed, has long since, from the very beginning of the revolution, shown the complete unanimity of all the Bolsheviks on this fundamental question.

What remains to be examined is the differences in the way the definition and characterisation of imperialism are *formulated*. Both drafts point specifically to the time when capitalism may be properly regarded as having become transformed into imperialism. The necessity for such a statement in the interests of precision and correct historical evaluation of economic development would hardly be denied. Comrade Sokolnikov says: "during the last quarter of a century"; I say: "about the beginning of the twentieth century". In the above-mentioned pamphlet on imperialism (on pp: 10 and 11, for instance*) I cited the testimony of an economist who has made a special study of cartels and syndicates. According to him, the turn towards the *complete* victory of the cartels in Europe came with the crisis of 1900-03. That is why, it seems, it would be more accurate to say: "about the beginning of the twentieth century" than "during the last quarter of a century". It would be more correct for still another reason. The above-mentioned specialist and all other European economists, generally work with data supplied by Germany, and Germany is *far ahead* of other countries in the formation of cartels.

Furthermore, speaking of monopolies my draft says: "Monopolist associations of capitalists have assumed decisive importance." Comrade Sokolnikov calls attention to monopoly associations *several times*. Only once is he fairly definite:

> "During the last quarter of a century the direct or indirect control of production organised on capitalist lines has passed into the hands of all-powerful, interlocking banks, trusts and syndicates which have formed world-wide monopoly associations under the direction of a handful of magnates of finance capital."

Here, it appears, there is too much "propaganda". "To win popularity" something that has no place there is injected

* See present edition, Vol. 22, p. 200-02.—*Ed*.

into the programme. In newspaper articles, in speeches, in popular pamphlets, "propaganda" is indispensable; the programme of a party, however, must be distinguished by the precision of its economics; it must contain nothing superfluous. The statement that "capitalist monopoly associations have acquired decisive importance" seems to me more exact; it says all that is necessary. Besides much superfluous matter, the above-quoted excerpt from Comrade Sokolnikov's draft contains an expression questionable from the theoretical point of view—"control of production organised on capitalist lines". Is it only organised on capitalist lines? No. This is too weak. Even production *not* so organised—petty craftsmen, peasants, small cotton-growers in the colonies, etc., etc.—has become dependent on banks and finance capital in general. When we speak of "world capitalism" in general (and this is the only capitalism we can discuss here if we are not to make mistakes), our statement that monopolist associations acquire "a decisive importance" *does not* mean that any other producers are excluded from subordination to this rule. To limit the influence of monopolist associations to "production organised on capitalist lines" is incorrect.

To proceed. In his draft, Comrade Sokolnikov twice repeats the same thing about the role played by banks: once in the above-quoted passage and a second time in the section dealing with crises and wars, where he defines finance capital as "the product of a merger of banking and industrial capital". My draft says that "enormously concentrated banking capital has fused with industrial capital". To say it once in the programme is sufficient.

The third feature "the export of capital to foreign countries has assumed vast dimensions" (so in my draft). In Comrade Sokolnikov's draft, we find a mere reference to the "export of capital" in one place, while in another, and in an entirely different connection, we read of "new countries which are fields for the utilisation of capital exported in search of superprofits". It is difficult to accept as correct the statement on superprofits and new countries since capital has also been exported from Germany to Italy, from France to Switzerland, etc. Under imperialism, capital has begun to be exported to the old countries as well, and not for

*super*profits alone. What is true with regard to the new countries is not true with regard to the export of capital in general.

The fourth feature is what Hilferding has called "the struggle for economic territory". This term is *not* exact, for it does not indicate what mostly distinguishes modern imperialism from the *older* forms of struggle for economic territory. Ancient Rome fought for such territories; the European kingdoms in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries fought for such territories and acquired colonies; so did old Russia by her conquest of Siberia, etc. The distinguishing feature of modern imperialism is (as pointed out in my draft) that "the whole world has been divided up territorially among the richer countries", i.e., the partition of the earth among various states has been completed. This circumstance makes the conflicts for a *re-partitioning* of the globe all the sharper, and is the cause of the particularly sharp collisions which lead to war.

All this is expressed in Comrade Sokolnikov's draft with great verbosity and is hardly accurate theoretically. But before I quote his statement of the case which also includes the economic partitioning of the globe, I will first touch upon that fifth and last feature of imperialism. Here is how this is expressed in my draft:

"The economic partitioning of the world among international trusts has begun." The data of political economy and statistics do not warrant any more elaborate statement. *This* partitioning of the world is a very important process, but it has just begun. *This* partitioning, or rather *re-partitioning* of the world, is bound to cause imperialist wars since the territorial partition is complete, i.e., there are *no* more "free" lands that can be grabbed without war against a rival nation.

Let us see now how Comrade Sokolnikov formulates this part of the programme:

"But the realm of capitalist relations becomes ever wider; they are carried across frontiers, into new lands. These lands serve the capitalists as markets for commodities, as sources of raw materials, as fields for the utilisation of capital exported in search of superprofits. The vast accumulation of surplus value at the disposal of finance capital (a product of a merger of banking and industrial capital) is dumped on to the world market. The rivalry of powerful nationally

and at times internationally organised associations of capitalists for command of the market, for the possession or control of territories of weaker countries, i.e., for the exclusive right to oppress them mercilessly, inevitably leads to attempts at partitioning the whole world among the richest capitalist countries, to imperialist wars, which engender universal suffering, ruin, and degeneration."

Here we have too many words, covering up a series of theoretical errors. One cannot speak of "attempts" at dividing up the world, because the world has *already* been divided up. The war of 1914-17 is not "an attempt at partitioning" the world, but a struggle for the *re-partitioning* of a world already divided. The war became inevitable for capitalism, because a few years before it imperialism *divided up* the world according to yardsticks of strength now out of date, and which are being "corrected" by the war.

The struggle for colonies (for "new lands"), and the struggle for "the possession of territories of weaker countries", all existed *before* imperialism. Modern imperialism is characterised by *something else*, namely, by the fact that at the beginning of the twentieth century the whole earth was divided up and occupied by various countries. That is why, under capitalism, the re-partitioning of "world domination" could only take place at the price of a world war. "Internationally organised associations of capitalists" existed *before* imperialism. Every joint-stock company with a membership of capitalists from various countries is an "internationally organised association of capitalists".

The distinguishing feature of imperialism is *something quite different*, something which *did not exist* before the twentieth century—the economic partitioning of the world among international trusts, the partitioning of countries, *by agreement*, into market areas. This particular point has not been expressed in Comrade Sokolnikov's draft, the power of imperialism is, therefore, represented as much *weaker* than it really is.

Finally, it is theoretically incorrect to speak of dumping a vast accumulation of *surplus value* on to the world market. This reminds one of Proudhon's theory of realisation, according to which capitalists may easily realise both fixed and variable capital, but find it difficult to realise surplus value. As a matter of fact capitalists cannot realise without

difficulties and crises either surplus value or variable and fixed capital. Commodities dumped on to the market are not only accumulated value, but also value reproducing variable capital and fixed capital. For instance, stocks of rails or iron are thrown into the world market, and should be exchanged for articles consumed by the workers, or for other means of production (wood, oil, etc.).

VI

Having thus concluded our analysis of Comrade Sokolnikov's draft, we must note one very valuable addition which he proposes and which in my opinion should be adopted and even developed. To the paragraph which deals with technical progress and the greater employment of female and child labour, he proposes to add the phrase "as well as the labour of unskilled foreign workers imported from backward countries". This addition is valuable and necessary. The exploitation of *worse paid* labour from backward countries is particularly characteristic of imperialism. On this exploitation rests, to a certain degree, the *parasitism* of rich imperialist countries which bribe a part of their workers with higher wages while shamelessly and unrestrainedly exploiting the labour of "cheap" foreign workers. The words "worse paid" should be added and also the words "and frequently deprived of rights"; for the exploiters in "civilised" countries always take advantage of the fact that the imported foreign workers have no rights. This is often to be seen in Germany in respect of workers imported from Russia; in Switzerland of Italians; in France, of Spaniards and Italians, etc.

It would be expedient, perhaps, to emphasise more strongly and to express more vividly in our programme the prominence of the handful of the richest imperialist countries which prosper parasitically by robbing colonies and weaker nations. This is an extremely important feature of imperialism. To a certain extent it facilitates the rise of powerful revolutionary movements in countries that are subjected to imperialist plunder, and are in danger of being crushed and partitioned by the giant imperialists (such as Russia), and on the other hand, tends to a certain extent to prevent the rise of profound revolutionary movements in

the countries that plunder, by imperialist methods, many colonies and foreign lands, and thus make a very large (comparatively) portion of their population *participants* in the division of the imperialist loot.

I would therefore suggest that the point on this exploitation of a number of weak countries by the richest should be inserted in that section of my draft where social-chauvinism is described (page 22 of the pamphlet*). The relevant passage in the draft would then assume the following form (the additions are in italics):

"Such a perversion is, on the one hand, the social-chauvinist trend, socialism in word and chauvinism in deed, the use of the 'defence of the fatherland' slogan to hide the predatory interests 'their own' national bourgeoisie *pursues in an imperialist war and to maintain the privileged position of citizens of rich nations which make enormous profits by pillaging colonies and weak nations*. Another such perversion, on the other hand, is the equally wide and international movement of the 'Centre', etc."

It is necessary to add the words "in an imperialist war" for greater accuracy. "Defence of the fatherland" is nothing but a slogan to justify the war, the recognition of it as legitimate and just. There are different kinds of wars. There may also be revolutionary wars. We must therefore say precisely what we mean: imperialist war. This is of course implied, but to avoid misinterpretation, it must not be implied, but stated directly and clearly.

VII

From the general or theoretical part of the programme we shall now turn to the minimum programme. Here we at once encounter the ostensibly "very radical" but really very groundless proposal of Comrades N. Bukharin and V. Smirnov *to discard* the minimum programme *in toto*. The division into maximum and minimum programmes is out of date, they claim. Since we speak of a transition to socialism there is no need for it. No minimum programmes;

* See present edition, Vol. 24, p. 470.—*Ed.*

our programme must indicate measures for the transition to socialism.

Such is the proposal of these two comrades. For some reason, they have not ventured to offer their own draft (although, since the revision of the Party programme was on the agenda of the next congress of the Party, they were really under an obligation to work out a draft). It is possible that the authors of the ostensibly "radical" proposal have themselves halted in indecision.... Be that as it may, their opinion should be examined.

War and economic ruin have forced all countries to advance from monopoly capitalism to state monopoly capitalism. This is the objective state of affairs. In a revolutionary situation, during a revolution, however, state monopoly capitalism is *directly* transformed into socialism. During a revolution it is impossible to move forward without moving towards socialism—this is the objective state of affairs created by war and revolution. It was taken cognisance of by our April Conference, which put forward the slogans, "a Soviet Republic" (the political form of the dictatorship of the proletariat), and the nationalisation of banks and syndicates (a basic measure in the transition towards socialism). Up to this point all the Bolsheviks unanimously agree. But Comrades Smirnov and Bukharin want to go farther, they want to discard the minimum programme *in toto*. This is contrary to the wise counsel of the wise proverb, "*Do not boast when riding to battle*; *boast when you return from it*".

We are riding to battle, that is, we are fighting for the conquest of political power by our Party. This power would be the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants. In taking power, we are not at all afraid of stepping beyond the bounds of the bourgeois system; on the contrary, we declare clearly, directly, definitely, and openly that we shall step beyond those bounds, that we shall fearlessly march towards socialism, that our road shall be through a Soviet Republic, through nationalisation of banks and syndicates, through workers' control, through universal labour conscription, through nationalisation of the land, confiscation of the landowners' livestock and implements, etc. In this sense we drafted our programme of measures for transition to socialism.

But we must not boast when riding to battle, we must not discard the minimum programme, for this would be an empty boast: we do not wish to "demand anything from the bourgeoisie", we wish to realise everything ourselves, we do not wish to work on petty details within the framework of bourgeois society.

This would be an empty boast, because first of all we must win power, which has not yet been done. We must first carry out the measures of transition to socialism, we must continue our revolution until the world socialist revolution is victorious, and only then, "*returning from battle*", may we discard the minimum programme as of *no further use.*

Is it possible to guarantee now that the minimum programme will not be needed any more? Of course not, for the simple reason that we have not yet won power, that socialism has not yet been realised, and that we have not achieved even the beginning of the world socialist revolution.

We must firmly, courageously, and without hesitation *advance* towards our goal, but it is ludicrous to declare that we have reached it when we definitely have not. Discarding the minimum programme would be equivalent to declaring, to announcing (to bragging, in simple language) that we have already won.

No, dear comrades, we have not yet won.

We do not know whether our victory will come tomorrow or a little later. (I personally am inclined to think that it will be tomorrow—I am writing this on October 6, 1917—and that there may be a delay in our seizure of power; still, tomorrow is tomorrow and not today.) We do not know how soon after our victory revolution will sweep the West. We do not know whether or not our victory will be followed by temporary periods of reaction and the victory of the counter-revolution—there is nothing impossible in that—and therefore, after our victory, we shall build a "triple line of trenches" against such a contingency.

We do not know and *cannot know* anything of this. *No one* is in a position to know. It is therefore ridiculous to discard the minimum programme, which is *indispensable* while we still live within the framework of bourgeois society, while we have not yet destroyed that framework, not yet realised the basic prerequisites for a transition to socialism, not yet

smashed the enemy (the bourgeoisie), and even if we have smashed them we have not yet annihilated them. All this will come, and perhaps much sooner than many people think (I personally think that it *will begin* tomorrow), *but it has not yet come.*

Take the minimum programme in the political sphere. This programme is limited to the bourgeois republic. We add that we do not confine ourselves to its limits, we start immediately upon a struggle for a higher type of republic, a *Soviet Republic*. This we must do. With unshakable courage and determination we must advance towards the new republic *and in this way we shall reach our goal*, *of that I am sure*. But the minimum programme should under no circumstances be discarded, for, first of all, there is *as yet* no Soviet Republic; secondly, "attempts at restoration" are not out of the question, and they will first have to be experienced and vanquished; thirdly, during the transition from the old to the new there may be temporary "combined types" (as *Rabochy Put* correctly pointed out a day or two ago)—for instance, a Soviet Republic together with a Constituent Assembly. Let us first *get over* all that—then it will be time to discard the minimum programme.

The same in the economic sphere. We all agree that the *fear* of marching towards socialism is the most contemptible *treason* to the cause of the proletariat. We all agree that the most important of the first steps to be taken must be such measures as the nationalisation of banks and syndicates. Let us first realise this and other similar measures, and *then we shall see*. Then we shall be able to see *better*, for practical experience, which is worth a million times more than the best of programmes, will considerably widen our horizon. It is possible, and even probable, nay, indubitable, that without transitional "combined types" the change will not take place. We shall not, for instance, be able to nationalise petty enterprises with one or two hired labourers at short notice or subject them to real workers' control. Their role may be insignificant, they may be bound hand and foot by the nationalisation of banks and trusts, but so long as there are even odds and ends of bourgeois relations, why abandon the minimum programme? As Marxists, advancing boldly to the world's greatest revolution, but at the same

time taking a sober view of the facts, we have no right to abandon the minimum programme.

By abandoning it we should prove that we have lost our heads before we have won. And we must not lose our heads either before our victory, at the time of victory, or after it; for if we lose our heads, we lose everything.

Comrade Bukharin actually proposed nothing concrete; he only repeated what had been said long before concerning the nationalisation of banks and syndicates. Comrade Smirnov in his article offered a very interesting and instructive series of tentative reforms that may be reduced to the regulation of production and consumption of commodities. In a general way all this is *contained* in my draft, followed by an "*etc.*". To go further, to venture into a discussion of separate and concrete measures, seems to me inexpedient. Many things will become clearer *after* the basic measures of the new type have been carried out, *after* the nationalisation of banks, *after* the introduction of workers' control; experience will tell us *a lot more*, for it will be the experience of millions, the experience in building a new system of economy with the conscious participation of millions. It stands to reason that to *indicate* the new, develop plans, evaluate them, analyse the local and partial experiences of various Soviets or supply committees, etc., is all very useful work to be done in articles, pamphlets and speeches. But to inject into the programme an overdose of detail is premature and may become even harmful by tying our hands with petty matters. Our hands must be free so that we may build the new with greater vigour, once we have fully entered upon the new path.

VIII

Comrade Bukharin's article touches upon another question worthy of consideration.

> "The question of the revision of our Party programme should be bound up with the question of working out a single programme for the international party of the proletariat."

This is not very clearly expressed. If we take it to mean that the author advises us not to accept a new programme until a single international programme, a programme of the Third International, has been drawn up, then we have to

object to this opinion most decisively. To postpone it on this account (I presume that there are no other reasons for delay; no one, for instance, demanded a postponement on account of inadequate preparation of our Party material for the revision) would be equivalent to *our* delaying the foundation of the Third International. The foundation of the Third International ought not of course to be understood formally. Not until the proletarian revolution has triumphed in at least one country, or until the war has come to an end, may we hope for a speedy and successful advance in convening a *great* conference of internationalist revolutionary parties of various countries; or for their consent to a formal adoption of a new programme. In the meantime we must advance our cause on the initiative of those parties which are now in a more favourable position than the others and can take the first step—not viewing it, of course, as the last step, not necessarily opposing their programme to other "Left" (i.e., internationalist revolutionary) programmes, but *working* directly *towards* the formulation of a general programme. Outside of Russia there is at present no other country in the world where there is comparative freedom for internationalists to meet, and where there are as many comrades well informed on subjects concerning international movements and programmes as there are in our Party. This is why we must take the initiative upon ourselves. This is our immediate duty as internationalists.

Apparently Comrade Bukharin views this matter in exactly the same way. At the beginning of the article he says that "the Party Congress which has just been concluded [it was written in August] recognised the necessity of revising the programme" and that "a special congress will be called for this purpose". We conclude from this that Comrade Bukharin has no objections to the adoption of a new programme at that congress.

If so, then we have perfect unanimity on this question. Hardly anyone would be against the proposition that our congress, upon adopting a new programme, express a desire to draw up a single general programme for the Third International, and take certain steps in that direction—hasten the conference of the Lefts, publish a collection of articles in several languages, set up a committee for the purpose

of collecting material on what has been done in other countries in order to "feel the way" (according to Comrade Bukharin's correct expression) for a new programme (the "Tribunists"[73] in Holland, the Lefts in Germany. The Socialist Propaganda League in America[74] has already been mentioned by Comrade Bukharin; we may also mention the American Socialist *Labour* Party[75] and its demand that "the political state give way to industrial democracy").

Comrade Bukharin has pointed out a flaw in my draft which I must acknowledge to be absolutely correct. He cites a passage in the draft (page 23 of the pamphlet*) where I discuss the present situation in Russia, the capitalist Provisional Government, etc. Comrade Bukharin is right in criticising this passage and saying that it should be transferred to the resolution on tactics or to the platform. I therefore propose either to leave out the last paragraph on page 23 altogether, or to put it as follows:

"Striving for a political system which would best ensure economic progress and the rights of the people in general, and, in particular, make the transition to socialism as painless as possible, the party of the proletariat cannot rest content", etc.

Finally, I must answer one question raised by a few comrades, but as far as I know, not yet discussed in the press. This is the question of Clause 9 of our political programme on the right of nations to self-determination. This clause consists of two parts: the first part is a new statement on the right to self-determination; the second contains not a demand but a declaration. I am asked whether a declaration is in place here. Generally speaking, there is no place for declarations in a programme, but I think an exception to the rule is necessary here. Instead of the word self-determination, which has given rise to numerous misinterpretations, I propose the perfectly precise concept: "the right to free secession". After six months' experience of the 1917 Revolution, it is hardly possible to dispute that the party of the revolutionary proletariat of Russia, the party which uses the Great-Russian language, is obliged to recognise the right to secede. When we win power, we shall immediately and uncondition-

* See present edition, Vol. 24, p. 471.—*Ed.*

ally recognise this right for Finland, the Ukraine, Armenia, and any other nationality oppressed by tsarism (and the Great-Russian bourgeoisie). On the other hand, we do not at all favour secession. We want as vast a state, as close an alliance of the greatest possible number of nations who are neighbours of the Great Russians; we desire this in the interests of democracy and socialism, to attract into the struggle of the proletariat the greatest possible number of the working people of different nations. We desire *proletarian revolutionary* unity, *unification*, and not secession. We desire *revolutionary* unification; that is why our slogan does not call for unification of all states in general, for the social revolution demands the unification *only* of those states which have gone over or are going over to socialism, colonies which are gaining their freedom, etc. We want *free* unification; that is why we must recognise the right to secede (without freedom to secede, unification cannot be called free). The more so must we recognise the right of secession, because tsarism and the Great-Russian bourgeoisie have by their oppression left great bitterness and distrust of the Great Russians generally in the hearts of the neighbouring nations, and these must be eradicated *by deeds* and not by words.

But we want unification, and this must be stated; it is so important to state it in the programme of a party of a heterogeneous state that it is necessary to abandon custom and to incorporate a declaration. We want the republic of the Russian (I am even inclined to say Great-Russian, for this is more correct) people to *attract* other nations to it. But how? Not by violence, but solely by voluntary agreement. Otherwise the unity and the brotherly ties of the *workers* of all countries are broken. Unlike the bourgeois democrats, we call for the brotherhood of *workers* of all nationalities, and not the brotherhood of nations, for we do not trust the bourgeoisie of any country, we regard them as our enemies.

This is why we should here allow an exception to the rule by inserting in Clause 9 a *declaration of principles*.

IX

The foregoing pages were written before No. 31 of *Rabochy Put* appeared with Comrade Y. Larin's article "The Labour Demands of Our Programme". We welcome this article as the

beginning of the discussion of the various draft programmes by our Central Organ. Comrade Larin dwells especially on that section of the programme which I had no occasion to work upon, and the draft for which is in the possession of the editors of the "Subsection on Labour Protection", the subsection was formed at the Conference of April 24-29, 1917. Comrade Larin proposes a number of *additions* which seem to me quite acceptable but which, I am sorry to say, are not always quite accurately expressed.

One point seems to me to have been ineptly formulated by Comrade Larin: "The correct [?] distribution of the labour force on the basis [?] of democratic [?] self-government by the workers in deciding how to employ [?] their persons [?]". In my opinion this is worse than the formulation of the subsection: "The labour exchanges must be proletarian class organisations", etc. (see *Materials*, p. 15). Comrade Larin, moreover, should have gone into the problem of a minimum wage much more thoroughly. He should have formulated his proposition with greater exactness, and should have *related it to the history* of the views of Marx and Marxism on this subject.

Furthermore, Comrade Larin thinks that the political and agrarian parts of the programme should have been "more carefully edited". We do hope that our Party press forthwith begins to discuss the question of *editing* this or that demand, without waiting for the congress, since, firstly, we shall not have a well prepared congress, and secondly, everyone who has had occasion to work on programmes and resolutions knows how often a careful *editing* of a certain point *discloses* and *eliminates* vagueness and disagreements of principle.

Finally, concerning the financial and economic part of the programme, Comrade Larin writes that "it is almost a blank, no mention is made, even of the annulment of war loans and the state debts contracted by tsarism [only tsarism?] or of the struggle against the fiscal utilisation of state monopolies, etc.". It is extremely desirable for Comrade Larin not to postpone his practical proposals in anticipation of the congress. He should bring them up immediately, or we shall not be well prepared for the congress. On the question of the annulment of state debts (and of course, not of

tsarism alone, but also of the bourgeoisie) we must give considerable thought to the question of small bondholders. As to the question about "the struggle against the fiscal utilisation of state monopolies", we must see how things stand with the monopoly production of articles of luxury, and what connection the proposed point has with programme demands for the abolition of all indirect taxes.

I repeat: in order to prepare our programme seriously, to ensure the actual co-operation of the entire Party, all those interested must *immediately* get busy and *publish* their suggestions as well as *precise drafts* of points already edited and which contain additions and amendments.

ADVICE OF AN ONLOOKER

I am writing these lines on October 8 and have little hope that they will reach Petrograd comrades by the 9th. It is possible that they will arrive too late, since the Congress of the Northern Soviets has been fixed for October 10. Nevertheless, I shall try to give my "Advice of an Onlooker" in the event that the probable action of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and of the whole "region" will take place soon but has not yet taken place.

It is clear that all power must pass to the Soviets. It should be equally indisputable for every Bolshevik that proletarian revolutionary power (or Bolshevik power—which is now one and the same thing) is assured of the utmost sympathy and unreserved support of all the working and exploited people all over the world in general, in the belligerent countries in particular, and among the Russian peasants especially. There is no need to dwell on these all too well known and long established truths.

What must be dealt with is something that is probably not quite clear to all comrades, namely, that in practice the transfer of power to the Soviets now means armed uprising. This would seem obvious, but not everyone has or is giving thought to the point. To repudiate armed uprising now would mean to repudiate the key slogan of Bolshevism (All Power to the Soviets) and proletarian revolutionary internationalism in general.

But armed uprising is a *special* form of political struggle, one subject to special laws to which attentive thought must be given. Karl Marx expressed this truth with remark-

able clarity when he wrote that "*insurrection is an art quite as much as war*".

Of the principal rules of this art, Marx noted the following:

(1) *Never play* with insurrection, but when beginning it realise firmly that you must *go all the way.*

(2) Concentrate a *great superiority of forces* at the decisive point and at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organisation, will destroy the insurgents.

(3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the of *offensive.* "The defensive is the death of every armed rising."

(4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.

(5) You must strive for *daily* successes, however small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain "*moral superiority*".

Marx summed up the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed uprising in the words of "Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: *de l'audace*, *de l'audace*, e*ncore de l'audace*".[76]

Applied to Russia and to October 1917, this means: a simultaneous offensive on Petrograd, as sudden and as rapid as possible, which must without fail be carried out from within and from without, from the working-class quarters and from Finland, from Revel and from Kronstadt, an offensive of the *entire* navy, the concentration of a *gigantic superiority* of forces over the 15,000 or 20,000 (perhaps more) of our "bourgeois guard" (the officers' schools), our "Vendée troops" (part of the Cossacks), etc.

Our *three* main forces—the fleet, the workers, and the army units—must be so combined as to occupy without fail and to hold *at any cost*: (a) the telephone exchange; (b) the telegraph office; (c) the railway stations; (d) and above all, the bridges.

The *most determined* elements (our "shock forces" and *young workers*, as well as the best of the sailors) must be formed into small detachments to occupy all the more important points and to *take part* everywhere in all important operations, for example:

to encircle and cut off Petrograd; to seize it by a combined attack of the sailors, the workers, and the troops—a task which requires *art and triple audacity*;

to form detachments from the best workers, armed with rifles and bombs, for the purpose of attacking and surrounding the enemy's "centres" (the officers' schools, the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, etc.). Their watchword must be: "*Better die to a man than let the enemy pass*!"

Let us hope that if action is decided on, the leaders will successfully apply the great precepts of Danton and Marx.

The success of both the Russian and the world revolution depends on two or three days' fighting.

Written on October 8 (21), 1917

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LETTER TO THE BOLSHEVIK COMRADES ATTENDING THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF THE NORTHERN REGION

Comrades,

Our revolution is passing through a highly critical period. This crisis coincides with the great crisis—the growth of the world socialist revolution and the struggle waged against it by world imperialism. A gigantic task is being presented to the responsible leaders of our Party, and failure to perform it will involve the danger of a complete collapse of the internationalist proletarian movement. The situation is such that, in truth, delay would be fatal.

Take a glance at the international situation. The growth of a world revolution is beyond dispute. The outburst of indignation on the part of the Czech workers has been suppressed with incredible ferocity, testifying to the government's extreme fright. Italy too has witnessed a mass outbreak in Turin.[77] Most important, however, is the revolt in the German navy. One can imagine the enormous difficulties of a revolution in a country like Germany, especially under present conditions. It cannot be doubted that the revolt in the German navy is indicative of the great crisis—the growth of the world revolution. While our chauvinists, who are advocating Germany's defeat, demand a revolt of the German workers immediately, we Russian revolutionary internationalists know from the experience of 1905-17 that a more impressive sign of the growth of revolution than a revolt among the troops cannot be imagined.

Just think what our position is now in the eyes of the German revolutionaries. They can say to us: We have only Liebknecht who openly called for a revolution. His voice has been stifled in a convict prison. We have not a single newspaper which openly explains the necessity for a revolu-

tion; we have not got freedom of assembly. We have not a single Soviet of Workers' or Soldiers' Deputies. Our voice barely reaches the real, broad mass of people. Yet we made an attempt at revolt, although our chance was only one in a hundred. But you Russian revolutionary internationalists have behind you a half-year of free agitation, you have a score of newspapers, you have a number of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, you have gained the upper hand in the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow, you have on your side the entire Baltic fleet and all the Russian troops in Finland. And still you do not respond to our call for an uprising, you do not overthrow your imperialist, Kerensky, although the chances are a hundred to one that your uprising will be successful.

Yes, we shall be real traitors to the International if, at such a moment and under such favourable conditions, we respond to this call from the German revolutionaries with ... *mere* resolutions.

Add to this, as we all perfectly well know, that the plotting and conspiracy of the international imperialists against the Russian revolution are rapidly growing. International imperialism is coming closer to the idea of stifling the revolution at all costs, stifling it both by military measures and by a peace made at the expense of Russia. It is this that is making the crisis in the world socialist revolution so acute, and is rendering our delay of the uprising particularly dangerous—I would almost say criminal.

Take, further, Russia's internal situation. The petty-bourgeois compromising parties which expressed the naïve confidence of the masses in Kerensky and in the imperialists in general, are absolutely bankrupt. Their collapse is complete. The vote cast against coalition by the Soviet curia at the Democratic Conference, the vote cast against coalition by a *majority* of the local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies (in spite of their central Soviet, where Avksentyev and other friends of Kerensky's are installed), the elections in Moscow, where the working-class population has the closest ties with the peasants, and where *over 49 per cent* voted for the Bolsheviks (and among the soldiers fourteen thousand out of seventeen thousand)—does this not signify that the confidence of the people in Kerensky and in those

who are compromising with Kerensky and Co. has completely collapsed? Can one imagine any way in which the people could say more clearly to the Bolsheviks than they did by this vote, "Lead us, we shall follow you"?

And we, who have thus won the majority of the people over to our side, and who have gained the Soviets in both the capital cities—are we to wait? What for? For Kerensky and his Kornilovite generals to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, and thus enter directly or indirectly, openly or secretly, into a conspiracy with *both* Buchanan *and* Wilhelm for the purpose of completely stifling the Russian revolution.

By the Moscow vote and by the re-elections to the Soviets, the people have expressed their confidence in us, but that is not all. There are signs of growing apathy and indifference. That is understandable. It implies not the ebb of the revolution, as the Cadets and their henchmen vociferate, but the ebb of confidence in resolutions and elections. In a revolution, the masses demand action, not words from the leading parties, they demand victories in the struggle, not talk. The moment is approaching when the people may conceive the idea that the Bolsheviks are no better than the others, since they were unable *to act* when the people placed confidence in them....

The peasant revolt is spreading over the whole country. It is perfectly clear that the Cadets and their hangers-on are minimising it in every way and are claiming it to be nothing but "riots" and "anarchy". That lie is being refuted because in the revolt centres the land is beginning to be handed over to the peasants. "Riots" and "anarchy" have never led to such splendid political results! The tremendous strength of the peasant revolt is shown by the fact that the compromisers and the Socialist-Revolutionaries of *Dyelo Naroda*, and *even* Breshko-Breshkovskaya, have begun to talk of transferring the land to the peasants in order to check the movement before it has finally engulfed them.

Are we to wait until the Cossack units of the Kornilovite Kerensky (who was recently exposed as a Kornilovite by the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves) succeed in suppressing this peasant revolt *piecemeal*?

Apparently, many leaders of our Party have failed to note the *specific* meaning of the slogan which we all adopted and

which we have repeated endlessly. The slogan is "All Power to the Soviets". There were periods, there were moments during the six months of the revolution, when this slogan did *not* mean insurrection. Perhaps those periods and those moments blinded some of our comrades and led them to forget that now, at least since the middle of September, this slogan for us too has become *equivalent to a call for insurrection*.

There can be no shadow of doubt on this score. *Dyelo Naroda* recently explained this "in a popular way", when it said "Kerensky will under no circumstances submit!" As if he could!

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" is nothing but a call for insurrection. And the blame will be wholly and undoubtedly ours, if we, who for months have been calling upon the people to revolt and repudiate compromise, fail to lead them to revolt on the eve of the revolution's collapse, after the people have expressed their confidence in us.

The Cadets and compromisers are trying to scare us by citing the example of July 3-5, by pointing to the intensified agitation of the Black Hundreds,[78] and so forth. But if any mistake was made on July 3-5, it was that we did not take power. I do not think we made a mistake then, for at that time we were not *yet* in a majority. But now it would be a fatal mistake, worse than a mistake. The spread of Black-Hundred agitation is understandable. It is an aggravation of extremes in an atmosphere of a developing proletarian and peasant revolution. But to use this as an argument against an uprising is ridiculous, for the impotence of the Black Hundreds, hirelings of the capitalists, *the impotence of the Black Hundreds in the struggle*, does not even require proof. In the struggle they are not worth considering. In the struggle Kornilov and Kerensky can only rely on the Savage Division and the Cossacks. And now demoralisation has set in even among the Cossacks; furthermore, the peasants are threatening them with civil war within their Cossack regions.

I am writing these lines on Sunday, October 8. You will read them not earlier than October 10. I have heard from a comrade who passed through here that people travelling on the Warsaw railway say, "Kerensky is bringing Cossacks to Petrograd!" This is quite probable, and it will be entirely

our fault if we do not verify it *most carefully* and do not *make a study* of the strength and distribution of *the Kornilovite troops of the second draft.*

Kerensky has again brought Kornilovite troops into the vicinity of Petrograd in order to prevent state power from passing into the hands of the Soviets, in order to prevent this power from proposing an immediate peace, in order to prevent all the land from being immediately handed over to the peasants, in order to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, and himself escape to Moscow! That is the slogan of the insurrection which we must circulate as widely as possible and which will have a tremendous success.

We must not wait for the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which the Central Executive Committee may delay even until November. We must not delay and permit Kerensky to bring up more Kornilovite troops. Finland, the fleet and Revel are represented at the Congress of Soviets. These can together start an immediate movement on Petrograd against the Kornilovite regiments, a movement of the fleet, artillery, machine-guns and two or three army corps, such as have shown, for instance in Vyborg, the intensity of their hatred for the Kornilovite generals, with whom Kerensky is again in collusion.

It would be a great mistake to refuse to seize the opportunity of immediately smashing the Kornilovite regiments of the second draft on the ground that the Baltic fleet, by moving into Petrograd, would allegedly expose the front to the Germans. The Kornilovite slanderers will say this, as they will tell any lie, but it is unworthy of revolutionaries to allow themselves to be intimidated by lies and slanders. Kerensky will surrender Petrograd to the Germans, that is now as clear as daylight. No assertions to the contrary can destroy our full conviction that this is so, for it follows from the entire course of events and Kerensky's entire policy.

Kerensky and the Kornilovites will surrender Petrograd to the Germans. And it is in order to save Petrograd that Kerensky must be overthrown and power taken by the *Soviets of both capital cities*. These Soviets will immediately propose a peace to all the nations and will thereby fulfil their duty to the German revolutionaries. They will thereby also be taking a decisive step towards frustrating the criminal

conspiracies against the Russian revolution, the conspiracies of international imperialism.

Only the immediate movement of troops from Finland, and of the Baltic fleet, Revel and Kronstadt against the Kornilovite forces quartered near Petrograd can save the Russian and the world revolution. Such a movement has a hundred to one chance of leading *within a few days* to the surrender of a part of the Cossack troops, to the utter defeat of the other part, and to the overthrow of Kerensky, for the workers and the soldiers of both capital cities will support such a movement.

In truth, delay would be fatal.

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" is a slogan of insurrection. Whoever uses this slogan without having grasped this and given thought to it will have only himself to blame. And insurrection must be treated as an *art*. I insisted on this during the Democratic Conference and I insist on it now, because *that* is what Marxism teaches us, and it is what is being taught us by the present situation in Russia and in the world generally.

It is not a question of voting, of attracting the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, of additional provincial Soviets, or of a congress of these Soviets. It is a question of insurrection, which *can* and must be decided by Petrograd, Moscow, Helsingfors, Kronstadt, Vyborg and Revel. It is *in the vicinity of Petrograd* and in Petrograd itself that the insurrection can, and must be decided on and effected, as earnestly as possible, with as much preparation as possible, as quickly as possible and as energetically as possible.

The fleet, Kronstadt, Vyborg, and Revel can and must advance on Petrograd; they can and must smash the Kornilovite regiments, rouse both the capital cities, start a mass agitation for a government which will immediately give land to the peasants and immediately make proposals for peace, overthrow Kerensky's government and establish such a government.

Delay would be fatal.

October 8, 1917. *N. Lenin*

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Published according to a type written copy

MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) OCTOBER 10 (23), 1917[79]

1
REPORT

MINUTES

Comrade Lenin maintains that a sort of indifference to the question of insurrection has been noticeable since the beginning of September. But this is impermissible if we are issuing the slogan of the seizure of power by the Soviets in all seriousness. It is therefore high time to pay attention to the technical aspect of the question. Apparently a lot of time has already been lost.

Nevertheless the question is an urgent one, and the decisive moment is near.

The international situation is such that we must take the initiative.

What is being done to surrender territory as far as Narva, and to surrender Petrograd makes it still more imperative for us to take decisive action.

The political situation is also working impressively in this direction. Decisive action on our part on July 3, 4 and 5 would have failed because we did not have the majority behind us. Since then we have made tremendous progress.

Absenteeism and indifference on the part of the masses is due to their being tired of words and resolutions.

We now have the majority behind us. Politically, the situation is fully ripe for taking power.

The agrarian movement is also developing in that direction, for it is obvious that extreme effort would be needed to stem that movement. The slogan of the transfer of all

land has become the general slogan of the peasants. The political situation, therefore, is mature. We must speak of the technical aspect. That is the crux of the matter. Nevertheless we, like the defencists, are inclined to regard the systematic preparation of an uprising as something in the nature of a political sin.

It is senseless to wait for the Constituent Assembly that will obviously not be on our side, for this will only make our task more involved.

The regional congress and the proposal from Minsk[80] must be used for the beginning of decisive action.

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Published according to the handwritten copy of the Minutes

2
RESOLUTION

The Central Committee recognises that the international position of the Russian revolution (the revolt in the German navy which is an extreme manifestation of the growth throughout Europe of the world socialist revolution; the threat of peace by the imperialists with the object of strangling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the indubitable decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans), and the fact that the proletarian party has gained a majority in the Soviets—all this, taken in conjunction with the peasant revolt and the swing of popular confidence towards our Party (the elections in Moscow), and, finally, the obvious preparations being made for a second Kornilov revolt (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the dispatch of Cossacks to Petrograd, the encircling of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.)—all this places the armed uprising on the order of the day.

Considering therefore that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organisations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the action of our people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view.

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Published according to the manuscript

MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) OCTOBER 10 (23), 1917[81]

1
REPORT

MINUTES

Comrade Lenin read the resolution adopted by the Central Committee at the previous meeting. He stated that the resolution had been adopted with two dissenting votes. If the dissident comrades wished to make a statement, a discussion could be held; meanwhile he continued with the motives of the resolution.

If the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties were to break with their policy of conciliation, a compromise with them could be proposed. The proposal bad been made, but those parties had obviously rejected the compromise.* On the other hand, by that time it had become definitely clear that the masses were following the Bolsheviks. That had been before the Kornilov revolt. Lenin cited election returns from Petrograd and Moscow as evidence. The Kornilov revolt had pushed the masses still more decisively to the side of the Bolsheviks. The alignment of forces at the Democratic Conference. The position was clear—either Kornilov's dictatorship or the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorer strata of the peasantry. The Party could not be guided by the temper of the masses because it was changeable and incalculable; the Party must be guided by an objective analysis and an appraisal of the revolution. The masses had put their trust in the Bolsheviks and

* See present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 305-10.—*Ed.*

demanded deeds from them and not words, a decisive policy both in the struggle against the war and in the struggle against economic ruin. If the political analysis of the revolution were taken as the basis, it would be perfectly clear that even anarchic outbursts confirmed that.

Lenin went onto analyse the situation in Europe and showed that revolution would be even more difficult in Europe than in Russia; if matters had gone as far as a revolt in the navy in such a country as Germany, there too they must already have gone very far. Certain objective data on the international situation showed that by acting at that moment the Bolsheviks would have all proletarian Europe on their side; he showed that the bourgeoisie wanted to surrender Petrograd. That could only be prevented by the Bolsheviks taking over Petrograd. The obvious conclusion from all this was—the armed uprising was on the order of the day as was stated in the resolution of the Central Committee.

It would be better to draw practical conclusions from the resolution after hearing the reports of representatives from the centres.

From a political analysis of the class struggle in Russia and in Europe there emerged the necessity to pursue the most determined and most active policy, which could be only the armed uprising.

PROMARX
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

2

SPEECHES IN DISCUSSION

MINUTES

1

Comrade Lenin argued against Milyutin and Schotmann and showed that it was not a matter of armed forces, that it was not a question of fighting against the troops but of one part of the army fighting against another. He could see no pessimism in what had been said there. He demonstrated that the forces on the side of the bourgeoisie were small. The facts showed that ours were superior to the enemy. Why could the Central Committee not begin? There was no reason that derived from the facts. To reject the resolution of the

Central Committee it would have to be proved that there was no economic ruin and that the international situation would not lead to complications. If trade union leaders were in favour of full power they knew very well what they wanted. Objective conditions showed that the peasantry must be led; they would follow the proletariat.

Some were afraid that Bolsheviks would not be able to maintain power, but at that moment there was a better chance than ever that they would be able to.

Lenin expressed the wish that the debate be confined to the substance of the resolution.

2

If all resolutions were defeated in that manner nothing better could be wished for. Zinoviev was saying: do away with the "Power to the Soviets" slogan and bring pressure to bear on the government. When it was said that the time was ripe for insurrection there could be no question of conspiracy. Since an insurrection was inevitable politically, it must be regarded as an art. Politically, an insurrection was due.

Because there was only enough bread for a day the Party could not wait for the Constituent Assembly. Comrade Lenin proposed that the resolution be approved, that energetic preparations be begun and that it be left to the Central Committee and the Soviet to decide when.

3

Comrade Lenin opposed Zinoviev, saying that the revolution could not be contrasted to the February revolution. He proposed a resolution straight to the point.

3

RESOLUTION

The meeting fully welcomes and fully supports the resolution of the Central Committee and calls upon all organisations and on workers and soldiers to make all-round, energetic preparations for an armed uprising and to support

the centre set up for that purpose by the Central Committee; the meeting expresses its complete confidence that the Central Committee and the Soviet will indicate in good time the favourable moment and the most appropriate methods of attack.

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No. 10, 1927

Speeches published according to a typewritten copy of the Minutes; resolution according to the manuscript

LETTER TO COMRADES

Comrades,

We are living in a time that is so critical, events are moving at such incredible speed that a publicist, placed by the will of fate somewhat aside from the mainstream of history, constantly runs the risk either of being late or proving uninformed, especially if some time elapses before his writings appear in print. Although I fully realise this, I must nevertheless address this letter to the Bolsheviks, even at the risk of its not being published at all, for the vacillations against which I deem it my duty to warn in the most decisive manner are of an unprecedented nature and may have a disastrous effect on the Party, the movement of the international proletariat, and the revolution. As for the danger of being too late, I will prevent it by indicating the nature and date of the information I possess.

It was not until Monday morning, October 16, that I saw a comrade who had on the previous day participated in a very important Bolshevik gathering in Petrograd, and who informed me in detail of the discussion.[82] The subject of discussion was that same question of the uprising discussed by the Sunday papers of all political trends. The gathering represented all that is most influential in all branches of Bolshevik work in the capital. Only a most insignificant minority of the gathering, namely, all in all two comrades, took a negative stand. The arguments which those comrades advanced are so weak, they are a manifestation of such an astounding confusion, timidity, and collapse of all the fundamental ideas of Bolshevism and proletarian

revolutionary internationalism that it is not easy to discover an explanation for such shameful vacillations. The fact, however, remains, and since the revolutionary party has no right to tolerate vacillations on such a serious question, and since this pair of comrades, who have scattered their principles to the winds, might cause some confusion, it is necessary to analyse their arguments, to expose their vacillations, and to show how shameful they are. The following lines are an attempt to do this.

"We have no majority among the people, and without this condition the uprising is hopeless...."

People who can say this are either distorters of the truth or pedants who want an advance guarantee that throughout the whole country the Bolshevik Party has received exactly one-half of the votes plus one, this they want at all events, without taking the least account of the real circumstances of the revolution. History has never given such a guarantee, and is quite unable to give it in any revolution. To make such a demand is jeering at the audience, and is nothing but a cover to hide one's own *flight* from reality.

For reality shows us clearly that it was after the July days that the majority of the people began quickly to go over to the side of the Bolsheviks. This was demonstrated first by the August 20 elections in Petrograd, even before the Kornilov revolt, when the Bolshevik vote rose from 20 to 33 per cent in the city not including the suburbs, and then by the district council elections in Moscow in September, when the Bolshevik vote rose from 11 to 49.3 per cent (one Moscow comrade, whom I saw recently, told me that the correct figure is 51 per cent). This was proved by the new elections to the Soviets. It was proved by the fact that a majority of the peasant Soviets, their "Avksentyev" central Soviet notwithstanding, has expressed itself *against* the coalition . To be against the coalition means in *practice* to follow the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, reports from the front prove more frequently and more definitely that the soldiers are passing *en masse* over to the side or the Bolsheviks with ever greater determination, in spite of the malicious slan-

ders and attacks by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, officers, deputies, etc., etc.

Last, but not least, the most outstanding fact of present-day Russian life is *the revolt of the peasantry*. This shows objectively, not by words but by deeds, that the people are going over to the side of the Bolsheviks. But the fact remains, notwithstanding the lies of the bourgeois press and its miserable yes-men of the "vacillating" *Novaya Zhizn* crowd, who shout about riots and anarchy. The peasant movement in Tambov Gubernia[83] was an uprising both in the physical and political sense, an uprising that has yielded such splendid political results as, in the first place, agreement to transfer the land to the peasants. It is not for nothing that the Socialist-Revolutionary rabble, including *Dyelo Naroda*, who are frightened by the uprising, now scream about the need to transfer the land to the peasants. Here is a *practical* demonstration of the correctness of Bolshevism and of its success. It proved to be impossible to "teach" the Bonapartists and their lackeys in the Pre-parliament otherwise than by an uprising.

This is a fact and facts are stubborn things. And such a factual "argument" *in favour* of an uprising is stronger than thousands of "pessimistic" evasions on the part of confused and frightened politicians.

If the peasant uprising were not an event of nation-wide political import, the Socialist-Revolutionary lackeys from the Pre-parliament would not be shouting about the need to hand over the land to the peasants.

Another splendid political and revolutionary consequence of the peasant uprising, as already noted in *Rabochy Put*, is the delivery of grain to the railway stations in Tambov Gubernia. Here is another "argument" for you, confused gentlemen, an argument in favour of the uprising as the only means to save the country from the famine that is knocking at our door and from a crisis of unheard-of dimensions. While the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik betrayers of the people are grumbling, threatening, writing resolutions, promising to feed the hungry by convening the Constituent Assembly, the people are beginning to solve the bread problem *Bolshevik-fashion*, *by rebelling* against the landowners, capitalists, and speculators.

Even the *bourgeois* press, even *Russkaya Volya*, was compelled to admit the wonderful results of *such* a solution (the only real solution) of the bread problem, by publishing information to the effect that the railway stations in Tambov Gubernia were swamped with grain.... *And this after the peasants had revolted!*

To doubt now that the majority of the people are following and will follow the Bolsheviks is shameful vacillation and in practice is the abandoning of *all* the principles of proletarian revolutionism, the complete renunciation of Bolshevism.

"We are not strong enough to seize power, and the bourgeoisie is not strong enough to hinder the convening of the Constituent Assembly."

The first part of this argument is a simple paraphrase of the preceding one. It does not gain in strength or power of conviction, when the confusion of its authors and their fear of the bourgeoisie are expressed in terms of pessimism in respect of the workers and optimism in respect of the bourgeoisie. If the officer cadets and the Cossacks say that they will fight against the Bolsheviks to the last drop of blood, this deserves full credence; if, however, the workers and soldiers at hundreds of meetings express full confidence in the Bolsheviks and affirm their readiness to defend the transfer of power to the Soviets, then it is "timely" to recall that voting is one thing and fighting another!

If you argue like that, of course, you "refute" the possibility of an uprising. But, we may ask, in what way does this peculiarly orientated "pessimism" with its peculiar urge differ from a political shift to the side of the bourgeoisie?

Look at the facts. Remember the Bolshevik declarations, repeated thousands of times and now "forgotten" by our pessimists. We have said thousands of times that the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies are a force, that they are the vanguard of the revolution, that they *can* take power. Thousands of times have we upbraided the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries for phrase-mongering about the "plenipotentiary organs of democracy" accompanied by *fear* to transfer power to the Soviets.

And what has the Kornilov revolt proved? It has proved that the Soviets are a real force.

And, now, after this has been proved by experience, by facts, we are expected to repudiate Bolshevism, deny ourselves, and say that we are not strong enough (although the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow and a majority of the provincial Soviets are on the side of the Bolsheviks)! Are these not shameful vacillations? As a matter of fact, our "pessimists" are abandoning the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets", though they *are afraid* to admit it.

How can it be proved that the bourgeoisie are not strong enough to hinder the calling of the Constituent Assembly?

If the Soviets *have not the strength* to overthrow the bourgeoisie, this *means* the latter are strong enough to prevent the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, for there is nobody else to stop them. To trust the promises of Kerensky and Co., to trust the resolutions of the servile Pre-parliament—is this worthy of a member of a proletarian party and a revolutionary?

Not only has the bourgeoisie *strength enough* to hinder the convocation of the Constituent Assembly if the present government is not overthrown, but it can also achieve this result *indirectly* by surrendering Petrograd to the Germans, laying open the front, increasing lockouts, and sabotaging deliveries of foodstuffs. It has been proved by *facts* that the bourgeoisie have already been partly doing this, which means that they are capable of doing it *to the full extent*, if the workers and soldiers do not overthrow them.

"The Soviets must be a revolver pointed at the head of the government with the demand to convene the Constituent Assembly and stop all Kornilovite plots."

This is how far one of the two sad pessimists has gone.

He had to go that far, for to reject the uprising is *the same as* rejecting the slogan "All Power to the Soviets".

Of course, a slogan is "not sacred"; we all agree to that. But then why has *no one* raised the question of changing this slogan (in the same way as I raised the question after the July days*)? Why be *afraid* to say it openly, when the

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* See present edition, Vol. 25, pp. 185-92.—*Ed.*

Party, since September, has been discussing the question of the uprising, which is now *the only way* to realise the slogan "All Power to the Soviets".

There is no way for our sad pessimists to turn. A renunciation of the uprising is a renunciation of the transfer of power to the Soviets and implies a "transfer" of all hopes and expectations to the kind bourgeoisie, which has "promised" to convoke the Constituent Assembly.

Is it so difficult to understand that once *power* is in the hands of the Soviets, the Constituent Assembly and its success are *guaranteed*? The Bolsheviks have said so thousands of times and *no one* has ever attempted to refute it. Everybody has recognised this "combined type", but to smuggle in a *renunciation* of the transfer of power to the Soviets under cover of the words "combined type", to smuggle it in *secretly* while *fearing* to renounce our slogan openly is a matter for wonder. Is there any parliamentary term to describe it?

Someone has very pointedly retorted to our pessimist: "Is it a revolver with no cartridges?" If so, it means going over directly to the Lieberdans, who have declared the Soviets a "revolver" thousands of times and have deceived the people thousands of times. For *while they were in control* the Soviets proved to be worthless.

If, however, it is to be a revolver "with cartridges", this cannot mean anything but *technical* preparation for an uprising; the cartridges have to be procured, the revolver has to be loaded—and cartridges alone will not be enough.

Either go over to the side of the Lieberdans and *openly* renounce the slogan "All Power to the Soviets", or start the uprising.

There is no middle course.

"The bourgeoisie cannot surrender Petrograd to the Germans, although Rodzyanko wants to, for the fighting is done not by the bourgeoisie, but by our heroic sailors."

This argument again reduces itself to the same "optimism" *in respect of the bourgeoisie* which is fatally manifested at every step by those who are pessimistic about the revolutionary forces and capabilities of the proletariat.

The fighting is done by the heroic sailors, *but* this did not

prevent *two* admirals from *disappearing* before the capture of Esel!

That is a fact and facts are stubborn things. The facts prove that admirals *are capable* of treachery no less than Kornilov. It is an undisputed fact that Field Headquarters has not been reformed, and that the commanding staff is Kornilovite in composition.

If the Kornilovites (with Kerensky at their head, for he is also a Kornilovite) *want* to surrender Petrograd, they can do it in two or even in three ways.

First, they can, through an act of treachery on the part of the Kornilovite officers, open the northern land front.

Second, they can "agree" on freedom of action for the entire German navy, which is *stronger* than we are; they can agree both with the German and the British imperialists. Moreover, the admirals who have disappeared may have delivered the *plans* to the Germans *as well*.

Third, they can, by means of lockouts, and by sabotaging the delivery of food, bring our troops to *complete* desperation and impotence.

Not a single one of these three ways can be denied. The facts have proved that the bourgeois-Cossack party of Russia has already knocked at all three doors and has tried to force open each of them.

What follows? It follows that we have no right to *wait* until the bourgeoisie strangle the revolution.

Experience has proved that Rodzyanko's wishes are no trifle. Rodzyanko is a man of affairs. Rodzyanko is backed by *capital*. This is beyond dispute. Capital is tremendous strength as long as the proletariat do not have power. *For decades*, Rodzyanko has faithfully and truly carried out the policies of capital.

What follows? It follows that to vacillate on the question of an uprising as the only means to save the revolution means to sink into that cowardly credulity in the bourgeoisie which is half-Lieberdan, Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik and half "peasant-like" unquestioning credulity, against which the Bolsheviks have been battling most of all.

Either fold your idle arms on your empty chest, wait and swear "faith" in the Constituent Assembly until Rodzyanko and Co. have surrendered Petrograd and strangled the

revolution or start an uprising. There is no middle course.

Even the convocation of the Constituent Assembly does not, in itself, change anything, for no "constituting", no voting by any arch-sovereign assembly will have any effect on the famine, or on Wilhelm. Both the convocation and the *success* of the Constituent Assembly depend upon the transfer of power to the Soviets. This old Bolshevik truth is being proved by reality ever more strikingly and ever more *cruelly*.

"We are becoming stronger every day. We can enter the Constituent Assembly as a strong opposition; why should we stake everything?..."

This is the argument of a philistine who has "read" that the Constituent Assembly is being called, and who trustingly acquiesces in the most legal, most loyal, most constitutional course.

It is a pity, however, that *waiting* for the Constituent Assembly does not solve either the question of famine or the question of surrendering Petrograd . This "trifle" is forgotten by the naïve or the confused or those who have allowed themselves to be frightened.

The famine will not wait. The peasant uprising did not wait. The war will not wait. The admirals who have disappeared did not wait.

Will the famine agree to wait, because we Bolsheviks *proclaim* faith in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly? Will the admirals who have disappeared agree to wait? Will the Maklakovs and Rodzyankos agree to stop the lockouts and the sabotaging of grain deliveries, or to denounce the secret treaties with the British and the German imperialists?

This is what the arguments of the heroes of "constitutional illusions" and parliamentary cretinism amount to. The living reality disappears, and what remains is only a *paper* dealing with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; there is nothing left but to hold elections.

And blind people are still wondering why hungry people and soldiers betrayed by generals and admirals are indifferent to the elections! Oh, wiseacres!

"Were the Kornilovites to start again, we would show them! But why should we take risks and start?"

This is extraordinarily convincing and revolutionary. History does not repeat itself, but if we turn our *backs* on it, contemplate the first Kornilov revolt and repeat: "If only the Kornilovites would start"—if we do that, what excellent revolutionary strategy it would be. How much like a waiting game it is! Maybe the Kornilovites will start again at an inopportune time. Isn't this a "weighty" argument? What kind of an earnest foundation for a proletarian policy is this?

And what if the Kornilovites of the second draft will have learned a thing or two? What if they *wait* for the hunger riots to begin, for the front to be broken through, for Petrograd to be surrendered, *before they begin*? What then?

It is proposed that we build the tactics of the proletarian party on the possibility of the Kornilovites' repeating one of their old errors!

Let us forget all that was being and *has been demonstrated* by the Bolsheviks a hundred times, all that the six months' history of our revolution has proved, namely, that there is no way out, that there is no objective way out and can be none *except* a dictatorship of the Kornilovites or a dictatorship of the proletariat. Let us forget this, let us renounce all this and wait! Wait for what? Wait for a miracle, for the tempestuous and catastrophic course of events from April 20 to August 29 to be succeeded (due to the prolongation of the war and the spread of famine) by a peaceful, quiet, smooth, legal convocation of the Constituent Assembly and by a fulfilment of its most lawful decisions. Here you have the "Marxist" tactics! Wait, ye hungry! Kerensky has promised to convene the Constituent Assembly.

"There is really nothing in the international situation that makes it obligatory for us to act immediately, we would be more likely to damage the cause of a socialist revolution in the West, if we were to allow ourselves to be shot...."

This argument is truly magnificent: Scheidemann "himself", Renaudel[84] "himself" would not be able to "manipu-

late" more cleverly the workers' sympathies for the international socialist revolution!

Just think of it: under devilishly difficult conditions, having but *one* Liebknecht (and he in prison) with no newspapers, with no freedom of assembly, with no Soviets, with *all* classes of the population, including every well-to-do peasant, incredibly hostile to the idea of internationalism, with the imperialist big, middle, and petty bourgeoisie splendidly organised—the Germans, i.e., the German revolutionary internationalists, the German workers dressed in sailors' jackets, started a mutiny in the navy with one chance in a hundred of winning.

But we, with dozens of papers at our disposal, freedom of assembly, a *majority* in the Soviets, we, the best situated proletarian internationalists in the world, should refuse to support the German revolutionaries by our uprising. We ought to reason like the Scheidemanns and Renaudels, that it is most prudent not to revolt, for if we are shot, then the world will lose such excellent, reasonable, ideal internationalists!

Let us prove how reasonable we are. Let us pass a resolution of sympathy with the *German insurrectionists*, and let us renounce the *insurrection* in Russia. This would be genuine, reasonable internationalism. Imagine how fast world internationalism would blossom forth, if the same wise policy were to triumph *everywhere*!

The war has fatigued and tormented the workers of all countries to the utmost. Outbursts are becoming frequent in Italy, Germany and Austria. We *alone* have Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Let us then *keep on waiting*. Let us betray the German internationalists as we are betraying the Russian peasants, who, not by words but by deeds, by their uprising against the landowners, appeal to us to rise against Kerensky's government....

Let the clouds of the imperialist conspiracy of the capitalists of all countries who are ready to strangle the Russian revolution gather—we shall wait patiently until we are strangled *by the ruble*! Instead of attacking the conspirators and breaking their ranks by a victory of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, let us wait for the Constituent Assembly, where all international plots will be

vanquished by *voting*, provided Kerensky and Rodzyanko conscientiously convene the Constituent Assembly. Have we any right to doubt the honesty of Kerensky and Rodzyanko?

"But 'everyone' is against us! We are isolated; the Central Executive Committee, the Menshevik internationalists, the *Novaya Zhizn* people, and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries have been issuing and will continue to issue appeals against us!"

A crushing argument. Up to now we have been mercilessly scourging the vacillators for their vacillations. *By so doing*, we have won the sympathies of the people. *By so doing*, we have won over the Soviets, without which the uprising could not be safe, quick, and sure. Now let us use the Soviets which we have won over in order *to move into the camp of the vacillators*. What a splendid career for Bolshevism!

The whole essence of the policy of the Lieberdans and Chernovs, and also of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, consists in *vacillations*. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshevik internationalists have *tremendous* political importance as an *indication* of the fact that the *masses are moving to the left*. Two such facts as the passing of some 40 per cent of both Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries into the camp of the Left, on the one hand, and the peasant uprising, on the other, are clearly and obviously interconnected.

But it is the very character of this connection that reveals the abysmal spinelessness of those who have now undertaken to whimper over the fact that the Central Executive Committee, which has rotted away, or the vacillating Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Co., have come out against us. For *these* vacillations of the petty-bourgeois leaders—the Martovs, Kamkovs, Sukhanovs and Co.—have to be compared to the *uprising* of the peasants. Here is a *realistic* political comparison. With whom shall we go? Should it be with the vacillating handfuls of Petrograd leaders, who have expressed *indirectly* the *leftward swing* of the masses, but who, at *every* political turn, have shamefully whimpered, vacillated, run to ask forgiveness of the

Lieberdans, Avksentyevs and Co., *or with those masses that have moved to the left*?

Thus, and only thus, can the question be presented.

Because the peasant uprising has been betrayed by the Martovs, Kamkovs, and Sukhanovs, we, the workers' party of revolutionary internationalists, are asked to betray it, too. This is what the policy of blaming the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshevik internationalists reduces itself to.

But we have said that to help the vacillating, we must stop vacillating ourselves. Have those "nice" Left petty-bourgeois democrats not "vacillated" in favour of the coalition? In the long run we succeeded in making them follow us because we ourselves did not vacillate. Events have shown we are right.

These gentlemen by their vacillations have always held back the revolution; We alone have saved it. Shall we now give up, when the famine is knocking at the gates of Petrograd and Rodzyanko and Co. are preparing to surrender the city?!

"But we have not even firm connections with the railwaymen and the postal employees. Their official representatives are the Plansons.[85] And can we win without the post office and without railways?"

Yes, yes, the Plansons here, the Lieberdans there. What confidence have the *masses* shown them? Have we not always shown that those leaders betrayed the *masses*? Did the masses not turn away from those leaders *towards us*, both at the elections in Moscow and at the elections to the Soviets? Or perhaps the mass of railway and postal employees are not starving! Or do not strike against Kerensky and Co.?

"Did we have connections with these unions before February 28?" one comrade asked a pessimist. The latter replied by pointing out that the two revolutions could not be compared. But this reply only *strengthens* the position of the one who asked the question. For it is the Bolsheviks who have spoken thousands of times about prolonged preparation for the *proletarian* revolution *against the bourgeoisie* (and they have not spoken about it in order to forget their words when the decisive moment is at hand). The political and

economic life of the unions of postal and telegraph employees and railwaymen is characterised by the very *separation* of the proletarian elements of the masses from the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois upper layer. It is not absolutely necessary to secure "connections" with one or the other union beforehand; what matters is that only a victory of a proletarian and peasant uprising *can* satisfy the *masses* both of the army of railwaymen and of postal and telegraph employees.

"There is only enough broad in Petrograd for two or three days. Can we give bread to the insurrectionists?"

This is one of a thousand sceptical remarks (the sceptics can *always* "doubt" and cannot be refuted by anything but experience), one of those remarks that put the blame on the wrong shoulders.

It is Rodzyanko and Co., it is the bourgeoisie that are preparing the famine and speculating on strangling the revolution by famine. There is no escaping the famine and *there can be none* except by an uprising of the peasants against the landowners in the countryside and by a victory of the workers over the capitalists in the cities and Petrograd and Moscow. There is *no other way* to get grain from the rich, or to transport it despite their sabotage, or to break the resistance of the corrupt employees and the capitalist profiteers, or to establish strict accounting. The history of the supply organisations and of the food difficulties of the "democracy" with its millions of *complaints* against the sabotage of the capitalists, with its *whimpering* and *supplication* is proof of this.

There is no power on earth apart from the power of a victorious proletarian revolution that would advance from complaints and begging and tears to *revolutionary action*. And the longer the proletarian revolution is delayed, the longer it is put off by events or by the vacillations of the wavering and confused, the more victims it will claim and the more difficult it will be to *organise* the transportation and distribution of food.

"In insurrection delay is fatal" this is our answer to those having the sad "courage" to look at the growing economic ruin, at the approaching famine, and still *dissuade* the

workers from the uprising (*that is, persuade them to wait and place confidence in the bourgeoisie for some further time*).

"There is not yet any danger at the front either. Even if the soldiers conclude an armistice themselves, it is still not a calamity."

But the soldiers will not conclude an armistice. For this state power is necessary and that cannot be obtained without an uprising. The soldiers will simply *desert*. Reports from the front tell that. We must not wait because of the risk of aiding collusion between Rodzyanko and Wilhelm and the risk of *complete* economic ruin, with the soldiers deserting in masses, once they (*being already close to desperation*) sink into absolute despair and leave everything to the mercy of fate.

"But if we take power, and obtain neither an armistice nor a democratic peace, the soldiers may not be willing to fight a revolutionary war. What then?"

An argument which brings to mind the saying: one fool can ask ten times more questions than ten wise men can answer.

We have never denied the difficulties of *those in power* during an imperialist war. Nevertheless, we have always *preached* the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. Shall we renounce this, when the moment to act has arrived?

We have always said that the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country creates gigantic changes in the international situation, in the economic life of the country, in the condition of the army and in its mood—shall we now "forget" all this, and allow ourselves to be frightened by the "difficulties" of the revolution?

"As everybody reports, the masses are not in a mood that would drive them into the streets. Among the signs justifying pessimism may be mentioned the greatly increasing circulation of the pogromist and Black-Hundred press."

When people allow themselves to be frightened by the bourgeoisie, all objects and phenomena naturally appear

yellow to them. First, they substitute an impressionist, intellectualist criterion for the Marxist criterion of the movement; they *substitute* subjective impressions of moods *for* a political analysis of the development of the class struggle and of the course of events in the entire country against the entire international background. They "conveniently" forget, of course, that a firm party line, its unyielding resolve, is *also* a mood-creating *factor*, particularly at the sharpest revolutionary moments. It is sometimes very "convenient" for people to forget that the responsible leaders, by their vacillations and by their readiness to burn their yesterday's idols, cause the most unbecoming vacillations in the mood of certain strata of the masses.

Secondly—and this is at present the main thing—in speaking about the mood of the masses, the spineless people forget to add:

that "everybody" reports it as a tense and expectant mood;

that "everybody" agrees that, called upon by the Soviets for the defence of the Soviets, the workers will rise to a man;

that "everybody" agrees that the workers are greatly dissatisfied with the indecision of the centres concerning the "last decisive struggle", the inevitability of which they clearly recognise;

that "everybody" unanimously characterises the mood of the broadest masses as close to desperation and points to the anarchy developing therefrom;

that "everybody" also recognises that there is among the class-conscious workers a definite unwillingness to go out into the streets *only* for demonstrations, *only* for partial struggles, since a general and not a partial struggle is in the air, while the hopelessness of individual strikes, demonstrations and acts to influence the authorities has been seen and is fully realised.

And so forth.

If we approach this characterisation of the mass mood from the point of view of the entire development of the class and political struggle and of the entire course of events during the six months of our revolution, it will become clear to us how people frightened by the bourgeoisie are distorting the question. Things are not as they were before

April 20-21, June 9, July 3, for then it was a matter of *spontaneous excitement* which we, as a party, either failed to comprehend (April 20) or held back and shaped into a peaceful demonstration (June 9 and July 3), for we knew very well at that time that the Soviets were *not yet* ours, that the peasants *still* trusted the Lieberdan-Chernov and not the Bolshevik course (uprising), that consequently we could not have the majority of the people behind us, and that consequently the uprising would be premature.

At that time the majority of the class-conscious workers did *not* raise the question of the last decisive struggle at all; not one of all our Party units would have raised it at that time. As for the unenlightened and very broad masses, there was neither a concerted effort nor the resolve born out of despair; there was only a spontaneous *excitement* with the naïve hope of "influencing" Kerensky and the bourgeoisie by "action", by a demonstration pure and simple.

What is needed for an uprising is not this, but, on the one hand, a conscious, firm and unswerving resolve on the part of the class-conscious elements to fight to the end; and on the other, a mood of despair among the broad masses who *feel* that nothing can now be saved by half-measures; that you cannot "influence" anybody; that the hungry will "smash everything, destroy everything, even anarchically", *if* the Bolsheviks are not able to lead them in a decisive battle.

The development of the revolution has in practice brought *both* the workers *and* the peasantry to precisely this combination of a tense mood resulting from experience among the class-conscious and a mood of hatred towards those using the lockout weapon and the capitalists that is close to despair among the broadest masses.

We can also understand the "success" on this very soil of the scoundrels of the reactionary press who imitate Bolshevism. The malicious glee of the reactionaries at the approach of a decisive battle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has been observed in all revolutions without exception; it has always been so, and it is absolutely unavoidable. And if you allow yourselves to be frightened by *this* circumstance, then you have to renounce not only the uprising but the proletarian revolution in general. For in a cap-

italist society this revolution *cannot* mature *without* being accompanied by malicious glee on the part of the reactionaries and by hopes that they would be able to feather their nest in this way.

The class-conscious workers know perfectly well that the Black Hundreds work hand in hand with the bourgeoisie, and that a decisive victory of the workers (in which the petty bourgeoisie do not believe, which the capitalists are afraid of, which the Black Hundreds sometimes wish for out of sheer malice, convinced as they are that the Bolsheviks cannot retain power)—that this victory will completely *crush* the Black Hundreds, that the Bolsheviks *will be able* to retain power firmly and to the greatest advantage of all humanity tortured and tormented by the war.

Indeed, is there anybody in his senses who can doubt that the *Rodzyankos* and Suvorins are acting in concert, that the roles have been distributed among them?

Has it not been proved by facts that Kerensky acts on Rodzyanko's orders, while the State Printing Press of the Russian Republic (don't laugh!) prints the Black-Hundred speeches of reactionaries in the "Duma" at the expense of the state. Has not this fact been exposed *even* by the lackeys from *Dyelo Naroda*, who serve "their own mannikin"? Has not the experience of *all* elections proved that the Cadet lists were fully supported by *Novoye Vremya*, which is a venal paper controlled by the "interests" of the tsarist landowners?[86]

Did we not read yesterday that commercial and industrial capitalists (non-partisan capitalists, of course; oh, non-partisan capitalists, to be sure, for the Vikhlayevs and Rakitnikovs, the Gvozdyovs and Nikitins are not in coalition with the Cadets—God forbid—but with *non-partisan* commercial and industrial circles!) have donated the goodly sum of 300,000 rubles to the Cadets?

The whole Black-Hundred press, if we look at things from a class and not a sentimental point of view, is a *branch* of the firm "Ryabushinsky, Milyukov, and Co.". Capitalists buy, on the one hand, the Milyukovs, Zaslavskys, Potresovs, and so on; on the other, the Black Hundreds.

The *victory of the proletariat* is the only means of putting an end to this most hideous poisoning of the people by the cheap Black-Hundred venom.

Is it any wonder that the crowd, tired out and made wretched by hunger and the prolongation of the war, clutches at the Black-Hundred poison? Can one imagine a capitalist society on the eve of collapse in which the oppressed masses are *not* desperate? Is there any doubt that the desperation of the masses, a large part of whom are still ignorant, *will* express itself in the increased consumption of all sorts of poison?

Those who, in arguing about the mood of the masses, blame the masses for their own personal spinelessness, are in a hopeless position. The masses are divided into those who are consciously biding their time and those who unconsciously are ready to sink into despair; but the masses of the oppressed and the hungry are *not* spineless.

"On the other hand, the Marxist party cannot reduce the question of an uprising to that of a military conspiracy...."

Marxism is an extremely profound and many-sided doctrine. It is, therefore, no wonder that *scraps* of quotations from Marx—especially when the quotations are made *inappropriately*—can always be found among the "arguments" of those who break with Marxism. Military conspiracy is Blanquism, *if* it is organised not by a party of a definite class, *if* its organisers have not analysed the political moment in general and the international situation in particular, *if* the party has not on its side the sympathy of the majority of the people, as proved by objective facts, *if* the development of revolutionary events has not brought about a practical refutation of the conciliatory illusions of the petty bourgeoisie, *if* the majority of the Soviet-type organs of revolutionary struggle that have been recognised as authoritative or have shown themselves to be such in practice have not been won over, *if* there has not matured a sentiment in the army (if in war-time) against the government that protracts the unjust war against the will of the whole people, *if* the slogans of the uprising (like "All power to the Soviets", "Land to the peasants", or "Immediate offer of a democratic peace to all the belligerent nations, with an immediate abrogation of all secret treaties and secret diplomacy", etc.) have not become widely known and popular, *if* the advanced

workers are not sure of the desperate situation of the masses and of the support of the countryside, a support proved by a serious peasant movement or by an uprising against the landowners and the government that defends the landowners, *if* the country's economic situation inspires earnest hopes for a favourable solution of the crisis by peaceable and parliamentary means.

This is probably enough.

In my pamphlet entitled: *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* (I hope it will appear in a day or two), there is a quotation from Marx which really bears upon the question of insurrection and which enumerates the features of insurrection as an "art".*

I am ready to wager that if we were to propose to all those chatterers in Russia who are now shouting against a military conspiracy, to open their mouths and explain the difference between the "art" of an insurrection and a military conspiracy that deserves condemnation, they would either repeat what was quoted above or would cover themselves with shame and would call forth the general ridicule of the workers. Why not try, my dear would-be Marxists! Sing us a song *against* "military conspiracy"!

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* See pp. 131-32 of this volume.—*Ed.*

POSTSCRIPT

The above lines had been written when I received, at eight o'clock Tuesday evening, the morning Petrograd papers; there was an article by Mr. V. Bazarov in *Novaya Zhizn*. Mr. V. Bazarov asserts that "a handwritten manifesto was distributed in the city, in which arguments were presented in the name of two eminent Bolsheviks, against immediate action".

If this is true, I beg the comrades, whom this letter cannot reach earlier than Wednesday noon, to *publish it* as quickly as possible.

I did not write it for the press; I wanted to talk to the members of our Party by letter. But we cannot remain silent when the heroes of *Novaya Zhizn*, who do not belong to the Party and who have been ridiculed by it a thousand times for their contemptible spinelessness (they voted for the Bolsheviks the day before yesterday, for the Mensheviks yesterday, and who *almost* united them at the world-famous unity congress) —when such individuals receive a *manifesto* from members of our Party in which they carry on propaganda against an uprising. We must agitate also *in favour of* an uprising. Let the anonymous individuals come right out into the light of day, and let them bear the punishment they deserve for their shameful vacillations, even if it be only the ridicule of all class-conscious workers. I have at my disposal only one hour before I send the present letter to Petrograd, and I therefore can say only a word or two about one of the "methods" of the sad heroes of the brainless *Novaya Zhizn* trend. Mr. V. Bazarov attempts to polemise against Comrade Ryazanov, who has said, and who is a thousand times correct

in saying, that "all those who create in the masses a mood of despair and indifference are preparing an uprising".

The sad hero of a sad cause "rejoins" as follows:

"Have despair and indifference ever conquered?"

O contemptible fools from *Novaya Zhizn*! Do they know such examples of uprising in history, in which the masses of the oppressed classes were victorious in a desperate battle without having been reduced to despair by long sufferings and by an extreme sharpening of all sorts of crises, in which those masses had not been seized by indifference towards various lackey-like pre-parliaments, towards idle playing at revolution, towards the Lieberdans' reduction of the Soviets from organs of power and uprising to empty talking-shops?

Or have the contemptible little fools from *Novaya Zhizn* perhaps discovered among the masses an *indifference*—to the question of bread, to the prolongation of the war, to and for the peasants?

Written on October 17 (30), 1917

Published in *Rabochy Put* Nos. 40, 41 and 42, November 1, 2 and 3 (October 19, 20 and 21), 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the newspaper text

LETTER TO BOLSHEVIK PARTY MEMBERS[87]

Comrades,

I have not yet been able to obtain the Petrograd papers for Wednesday, October 18. When the full text of Kamenev's and Zinoviev's statement in the non-Party paper *Novaya Zhizn* was transmitted to me by telephone, I refused to believe it. But, as it has turned out, there can be no doubt about it and I have to avail myself of this opportunity to get a letter to Party members by Thursday evening or Friday morning; for to remain silent in the face of such unheard-of *strike-breaking* would be a crime.

The more serious the practical problem, and the more responsible and "prominent" the persons guilty of strike-breaking, the more dangerous it is, the more resolutely must the strike-breakers be kicked out, and the more unpardonable would it be to stop even to consider the past "services" of the strike-breakers.

Just think of it! It has been known in Party circles that the Party has been discussing the question of an insurrection since September. Nobody has ever heard of a single letter or manifesto by either of the persons named! Now, on the eve, one might say, of the Congress of Soviets, two prominent Bolsheviks come out *against* the majority, and, obviously, *against the Central Committee*. It is not said plainly, but the harm done to the cause is all the greater, for to speak in hints is even more dangerous.

It is perfectly clear from the text of Kamenev's and Zinoviev's statement that they have gone against the Central

Committee, for otherwise their statement would be meaningless. But they do not say *what* specific decision of the Central Committee they are disputing.

Why?

The reason is obvious: because it has not been published by the Central Committee.

What does this boil down to?

On a burning question of supreme importance, on the eve of the critical day of October 20, two "prominent Bolsheviks" attack an *un*published decision of the Party centre and attack it in the *non*-Party press and, furthermore; in a paper which on this very question is *hand in glove with the bourgeoisie against the workers' party*!

This is a thousand times more despicable and a *million times more harmful* than all the statements Plekhanov, for example, made in the non-Party press in 1906-07, and which the Party so sharply condemned! At that time it was only a question of elections, whereas now it is a question of an insurrection for the conquest of power!

On such a question, *after* a decision has been taken by the centre, to dispute this *unpublished* decision in front of the Rodzyankos and Kerenskys in a non-Party paper—can you imagine an act more treacherous or blacklegging any worse?

I should consider it disgraceful on my part if I were to hesitate to condemn these former comrades because of my earlier close relations with them. I declare outright that I no longer consider either of them comrades and that I will fight with all my might, both in the Central Committee and at the Congress, to secure the expulsion of both of them from the Party.

A workers' party, which the course of events is confronting more and more frequently with the need for an insurrection, is unable to accomplish that difficult task if, after their adoption, unpublished decisions of the centre are disputed in the non-Party press, and vacillation and confusion are brought into the ranks of the fighters.

Let Mr. Zinoviev and Mr. Kamenev found their own party with the dozens of perplexed people or with candidates for election to the Constituent Assembly. The workers will not join such a party, for its first slogan will be:

> "Members of the Central Committee who are defeated at a meeting of the Central Committee on the question of a decisive fight are permitted to resort to the non-Party press for the purpose of attacking the unpublished decisions of the Party."

Let them build themselves *such* a party; our workers' Bolshevik Party will only gain from it.

When all the documents are published, the strike-breaking act of Zinoviev and Kamenev will stand out even more glaringly. Meanwhile, let the workers consider the following question:

> 'Let us assume that the Executive Committee of an all-Russia trade union had decided, after a month of deliberation and by a majority of over 80 per cent, that preparations must be made for a strike, but that for the time being neither the date nor any other details should be divulged. Let us assume that, *after* the decision had been taken, two members, under the false pretext of a "dissenting opinion", not only began to write to local groups urging a reconsideration of the decision, but also permitted their letters to be communicated to *non*-Party newspapers. Let us assume, finally, that they themselves attacked the decision in non-Party papers, although it had not yet been published, and began to vilify the strike in front of the capitalists.
>
> 'We ask, would the workers hesitate to expel such blacklegs from their midst?'

* * *

As to the situation with regard to an insurrection now, when October 20 is so close at hand, I cannot judge from afar to what exact extent the cause has been damaged by the strike-breaking statement in the non-Party press. There is no doubt that very great *practical* damage has been done. In order to remedy the situation, it is necessary first of all to restore unity in the Bolshevik front by expelling the blacklegs.

The weakness of the ideological arguments against an insurrection will become clearer, the more we drag them into the light of day. I recently sent an article on this subject to *Rabochy Put*, and if the editors do not find it possible to print it, Party members will probably acquaint themselves with it in the manuscript.*

There are basically two so-called "ideological" arguments. First, that it is necessary to "wait" for the Constituent Assembly. Let us wait, perhaps we can hold on until then—hat is the whole argument. Perhaps, despite famine, despite economic chaos, despite the fact that the patience of the soldiers is exhausted, despite Rodzyanko's steps to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, despite the lockouts, perhaps we can hold on.

Perhaps and maybe—that is the whole point of the argument.

The second is noisy pessimism. Everything is fine with the bourgeoisie and Kerensky; everything is wrong with us. The capitalists have prepared everything wonderfully; everything is wrong with the workers. The "pessimists" are shouting at the top of their voices about the military side of the matter, but the "optimists" are silent, for to disclose certain things to Rodzyanko and Kerensky is hardly pleasant to anybody but blacklegs.

Difficult times. A hard task. A grave betrayal.

Nevertheless, the task will be accomplished; the workers will consolidate their ranks, the peasant revolt and the extreme impatience of the soldiers at the front will do their work! Let us close our ranks—the proletariat must win!

N. Lenin

Written on October 18 (31), 1917
First published in *Pravda* No. 250, November 1, 1927
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* See pp. 195-215 of this volume.—*Ed.*

THE TASKS OF OUR PARTY IN THE INTERNATIONAL

APROPOS OF THE THIRD ZIMMERWALD CONFERENCE[88]

Rabochy Put No. 22 of September 28 published the manifesto of the Third Zimmerwald Conference. If we are not mistaken, the only other newspaper that published this manifesto was the Menshevik, internationalist *Iskra*[89] No. 1 of September 26, which added a very brief note referring to the composition of the Third Zimmerwald Conference and the date on which it was held (August 20 to 27, N. S.). No other newspaper published either the manifesto or any detailed information about the Conference.

We are now in possession of certain materials on this Conference consisting of an article published in *Politiken*, the organ of the Swedish Left Social-Democrats (a translation of which appeared in *Työmies*, the organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Finland)[90] and two written communications, one from a Polish and one from a Russian comrade who took part in the Conference. On the basis of this information we will first of all say something about the Conference in general and then make our appraisal of it and of the tasks of our Party.

I

The representatives of the following parties and groups were present at the Conference: (1) the German "Independent" Social-Democratic Party (the Kautskyites); (2) the Swiss party; (3) the Swedish *Left* party (which, you will remember, has broken off all connection with the opportunist Branting party); (4) the Norwegians and (5) the Danes (there is nothing in our material to indicate whether this refers to the official,

opportunist, Danish party headed by the Minister Stauning); (6) the Social-Democratic Party of Finland; (7) the Rumanians; (8) the R.S.D.L.P. Bolsheviks; (9) the R.S.D.L.P. Mensheviks (Panin sent a written statement to the effect that he would not take part in this Conference on the grounds that it was not a representative conference; Axelrod, however, attended some of the meetings, *but did not sign the manifesto*); (10) the Menshevik internationalists; (11) the American group of Christian Socialist Internationalists (?), (12) the American Social-Democratic Propaganda Group (evidently this is the group I mentioned in my pamphlet, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution. Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party*, page 24,* for this group began to publish the newspaper, *The Internationalist*[91] in January 1917); (13) the Polish Social-Democrats united under the National Executive; (14) the Austrian Opposition (the Karl Marx Club, which was closed down by the Austrian Government after the execution of Stürgkh by Friedrich Adler[92]; this Club is also referred to in the above-mentioned pamphlet, page 25**); (15) the Bulgarian Independent Trade Unions (which, as the writer of the letter I have in my possession adds, belong not to the Tesnyaki, i.e., not to the Left, internationalist Bulgarian party, but to the Shiroki group, i.e., to the opportunist Bulgarian party); this delegate arrived after the Conference had closed, as also did the delegates of (16) the Serbian party.

Of these sixteen parties and groups, Nos. 3, 8, 12, 13, and 14 belong to the "third" trend referred to in the resolution of our Conference of April 24-29, 1917 (and in my pamphlet, page 23,*** in which this trend is called "true internationalist"); closer to this Left trend, or between it and the Kautskian Centre, stand groups 4 and 16, although it is difficult to define their position precisely—perhaps they also belong to the Centre. Then, group 1, and probably 2, 6 and 7, group 10 and probably 15, belong to the Kautskian Centre. Groups 5 (if this is Stauning's party) and 9 are ministerialists, defencists and social-chauvinists. Finally, group 11 obviously got to the Conference by accident.

* See present edition, Vol. 24, p. 79.—*Ed.*
** Ibid.—*Ed.*
*** Ibid., pp. 77-80.—*Ed.*

From this it is soon that the composition of the Conference was very mixed—even absurd, for the people who got together were *not* in agreement on the *main* thing, and therefore were *incapable* of really unanimous action, of really acting together; they were people who were bound to disagree on the *fundamental* trend of their policy. Naturally, the fruit of the "collaboration" of such people is either wrangling or gossip, or elastic, compromise resolutions written for the purpose of concealing the truth. Examples and proof of this we shall see in a moment...*

Written in October 1917
First published in 1928 in *Lenin Miscellany VII*

Published according to the manuscript

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* Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed.*

LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.)

Dear Comrades,

No self-respecting party can tolerate strike-breaking and blacklegs in its midst. That is obvious. The more we reflect upon Zinoviev's and Kamenev's statement in the non-Party press, the more self-evident it becomes that their action is strike-breaking in the full sense of the term. Kamenev's evasion at the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet is something really despicable. He is, don't you see, in full agreement with Trotsky. But is it so difficult to understand that in the face of the enemy, Trotsky *could not* have said, he had no right to say, and should not have said more than he did? Is it so difficult to understand that it is a *duty* to the Party which has concealed *its* decision from the enemy (on the necessity for an armed uprising, on the fact that the time for it is fully ripe, on the thorough preparations to be made for it, etc.), and it is this decision that makes it *obligatory* in public statements to fasten not only the "blame", but also the initiative upon the adversary? Only a child could fail to understand that. Kamenev's evasion is a sheer fraud. The same must be said of Zinoviev's evasion, at least of his letter of "justification" (written, I think, to the Central Organ), which is the only document I have seen (for, as to a dissenting opinion, "an alleged dissenting opinion", which has been trumpeted in the *bourgeois* press, I, a member of the Central Committee, have *to this very day* seen nothing of it). Among Zinoviev's "arguments" there is this: Lenin, he says, sent out his letters "*before* any decisions were adopted", and you did not protest. That is literally what Zinoviev

wrote, himself underlining the word *before* four times. Is it really so difficult to understand that *before* a decision has been taken on a strike by the centre, it is permissible to agitate for and against it; but that *after* a decision in favour of a strike (with the additional decision to conceal this from the enemy), to carry on agitation against the strike is strike-breaking? Any worker will understand that. The question of insurrection has been discussed in the centre since September. That is when Zinoviev and Kamenev could and *should* have come out in writing, so that *everybody*, upon seeing their arguments, would have realised that they had completely lost their heads. To conceal one's views from the Party for a whole month *before* a decision is taken, and to send out a dissenting opinion *after* a decision is taken—that is strike-breaking.

Zinoviev pretends not to understand this difference, he pretends not to understand that after a decision to strike has been taken by the centre, only blacklegs can carry on agitation among the lower bodies against that decision. Any worker will understand that.

And Zinoviev did agitate and attempted to defeat the centre's decision, both at Sunday's meeting,[93] where he and Kamenev secured not a single vote, and in his present letter. For Zinoviev has the effrontery to assert that "the opinion of the Party has not been canvassed" and that such questions "cannot be decided by ten men". Just think! Every member of the Central Committee knows that more than ten C.C. members were present at the decisive meeting, that a *majority of the plenary meeting* were present, that Kamenev himself declared at the meeting that "this meeting is decisive", that it was known with absolute certainty that the *majority* of the absent members of the Central Committee *were not in agreement* with Zinoviev and Kamenev. And now, *after* the Central Committee has adopted a decision at a meeting which Kamenev himself admitted to be *decisive*, a member of the Central Committee has the audacity to write that "the opinion of the Party has not been canvassed", and that such questions "cannot be decided by ten men". That is strike-breaking in the full sense of the term. Between Party congresses, the Central Committee decides. The Central Committee has decided. Kamenev and Zinoviev, who did not come out in

writing *before* the decision was taken, began to *dispute* the Central Committee's decision *after* it had been taken.

That is strike-breaking in the full sense of the term. After a decision has been taken, any dispute is *impermissible* when it concerns immediate and *secret* preparations for a strike. Now Zinoviev has the insolence to blame *us* for "warning the enemy". Is there any limit to his brazenness? Who is it that has damaged the cause, frustrated the strike by "warning the enemy", if not those who came out in the *non-Party* press?

How can one come out *against* a "decisive" resolution of the Party in a paper which on *this* question is band in glove with the entire bourgeoisie?

If that is tolerated, the Party will become impossible, the Party will be destroyed.

It is ridiculing the Party to give the name of "dissenting opinion" to that which Bazarov learns about and publishes in a non-Party paper.

Kamenev's and Zinoviev's statement in the non-Party press was especially despicable for the additional reason that the Party is not in a position to refute their *slanderous lie* openly. I know of no decisions regarding the date, Kamenev writes and publishes his writings in his own name and in the name of Zinoviev. (After such a statement, Zinoviev bears full responsibility for Kamenev's conduct and statements.)

How can the Central Committee refute this?

We cannot tell the capitalists the truth, namely, that we have *decided* on a strike and have decided to *conceal the moment chosen* for it.

We cannot refute the slanderous lie of Zinoviev and Kamenev *without doing even greater damage to the cause*. And the utter baseness, the real treachery of these two individuals is precisely in their having revealed the strikers' plan to the capitalists, for, since we remain silent in the press, everybody will guess *how* things stand.

Kamenev and Zinoviev have *betrayed* to Rodzyanko and Kerensky the decision of the Central Committee of their Party on insurrection and the decision to conceal from the enemy preparations for insurrection and the date appointed for it. That is a fact and no evasions can refute it. Two mem-

bers of the Central Committee have by a slanderous lie *betrayed* the decision of the workers to the capitalists. There can and must be only one answer to that: an immediate decision of the Central Committee:

"The Central Committee, regarding Zinoviev's and Kamenev's statement in the non-Party press as strike-breaking in the full sense of the term, expels both of them from the Party."

It is not easy for me to write in this way about former close comrades. But I should regard any hesitation in this respect as a crime, for otherwise a party of revolutionaries which does not punish prominent blacklegs would *perish*.

The question of insurrection, even if the blacklegs have now delayed it for a long time by betraying it to Rodzyanko and Kerensky, has not been *removed from the agenda*, it has not been removed by the Party. But how can we prepare ourselves for insurrection and lay plans for it, if we *tolerate* "prominent" strike-breakers in our midst? The more prominent, the *more dangerous* they are, and the less deserving of "forgiveness". *On n'est trahi que par les siens*, the French say. Only your *own people* can betray you.

The more "*prominent*" the strike-breakers are, the more imperative it is to punish them by immediate expulsion.

That is the only way for the workers' party to recuperate, rid itself of a dozen or so spineless intellectuals, rally the ranks of the revolutionaries, and advance to meet great and momentous difficulties hand in hand *with the revolutionary workers*.

We cannot publish the truth, namely, that *after* the decisive meeting of the Central Committee, Zinoviev and Kamenev at Sunday's meeting had the audacity to demand a *revision*, that Kamenev had the effrontery to shout: "The Central Committee has collapsed, for it has done nothing for a whole week" (I could *not* refute that because to say *what really had been done* was impossible), while Zinoviev with an air of innocence proposed this resolution, which was rejected by the meeting: "No action shall be taken before consulting with the Bolsheviks who are to arrive on October 20 for the Congress of Soviets."

Just imagine! After the *centre* has taken a decision to call a strike, it is proposed at a meeting of the rank and file

that it be postponed (until October 20, when the Congress was to convene. The Congress was subsequently postponed—the Zinovievs trust the Lieberdans) and be referred to a body *such* as the Party Rules do not provide for, that has *no* authority over the Central Committee, and that does *not* know Petrograd.

And *after this* Zinoviev still has the insolence to write: "This is hardly the way to strengthen the unity of the Party."

What else can you call it but a threat to effect a split?

My answer to this threat is that I shall go the limit, I shall win freedom of speech for myself before the workers, and I shall, *at whatever cost*, brand the blackleg Zinoviev as a blackleg. My answer to the threat of a split is to declare war to a finish, war for the expulsion of both blacklegs from the Party.

The Executive Committee of a trade union, after a *month* of deliberation, decides that a strike is inevitable, that the time is ripe, but that the date is to be concealed from the employers. After that, two members of the Executive Committee appeal *to the rank and file*, disputing the decision, and are defeated. Thereupon these two come out in the press and with a slanderous lie betray the decision of the Executive Committee to the capitalists, thus more than half wrecking the strike, or delaying it to a less favourable time by warning the enemy.

Here we have strike-breaking in the full sense of the term. And that is why I demand the expulsion of both the blacklegs, reserving for myself the right (in view of their threat of a split) to publish *everything* when publication becomes possible.

Written on October 19 (November 1), 1917

First published on November 1, 1927 in *Pravda* No. 250

Published according to a typewritten copy

SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARY PARTY CHEATS THE PEASANTS ONCE AGAIN

The Socialist-Revolutionary Party has made a solemn and public announcement, in its chief newspaper, *Dyelo Naroda*, of October 18 and 19, that the Minister of Agriculture's new land bill is a "major step towards the implementation of the Party's agrarian programme", and that the "Party's Central Committee insistently urges all Party organisations to launch a vigorous campaign in favour of the bill and popularise it among the masses".

Actually, however, this bill, produced by the Minister, S. L. Maslov, who is a member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, and summarised in *Dyelo Naroda*, is a *fraud on the peasants*. The S.R. Party has deceived the peasants: it has crawled away from its own land bill and has adopted the plan of the landowners and Cadets for a "fair assessment" and preservation of landed proprietorship. At its congresses during the first Russian revolution (1905) and the second Russian revolution (1917), the S.R. Party solemnly and publicly committed itself to the peasant demand for *confiscation* of the landed estates, that is, for their transfer to the peasants *without compensation*. Under Mr. Maslov's present project, however, not only are the landed estates left intact but the *landlords are also* to get the "fairly" assessed rent paid by the peasants for the "leased" lands.

This bill of Mr. Maslov's is downright betrayal of the peasants by the S.R. Party, and signifies its complete subservience to the landed proprietors. The utmost must be done, every effort must be made to drive this fact home to the widest possible sections of peasants.

On October 18, *Dyelo Naroda* carried Clauses 25-40 of Maslov's bill. Here are its main points:

(1) *Not all* landed estates are to go into the proposed "provisional lease pool".

(2) Landed estates are pooled by *land committees* set up under the law of April 21, 1917, which was issued by Prince Lvov's government of *landed proprietors*.

(3) The rent paid by the peasants for these tracts is to be fixed by the land committees "in accordance with the net income" and after deduction of various payments goes to the "rightful owner", *that is*, *the landed proprietor*.

This is a triple fraud worked on the peasants by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and each of these three points must be dealt with in greater detail.

Izvestia Vserossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov No. 88, dated August 19, carries a "model mandate drawn up on the basis of 242 mandates submitted by deputies from various localities to the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies held in Petrograd in 1917".

This summary of 242 mandates, made by representatives of peasants in the localities, gives the *best* idea of *what the peasants want*. This summarised mandate shows very well that the project of Maslov and the S.R. Party is a swindle.

The peasants are demanding the abolition of the right to private ownership of land; the conversion of *all* private land holdings, etc., into the property of the whole people, without compensation; the conversion of land tracts farmed on a highly efficient level (orchards, plantations, etc.) into "model farms", their transfer to "the exclusive use of the state and the communes"; the confiscation of "*all* livestock and farm implements", etc.

Such is the clear-cut statement of the peasant demands based on 242 local mandates submitted by the peasants themselves.

But the S.R. Party, having entered "a coalition" (that is, an alliance or agreement) with the bourgeoisie (the capitalists) and the landowners, and taking part in the government of capitalists and landowners, has now produced a bill which *does not abolish landed property* but transfers *only a part* of the landed estates into a *provisional lease pool*.

Under the bill, *no* orchards, plantations, beet fields, etc., can go into the lease pool! *Nor* can the pool include lands required "to satisfy the needs of the owner, his family, employees and workers, or to ensure the maintenance of available livestock"!

This means that the great landowner who has a sugar refinery, a potato processing plant, oil or other mill, orchards and plantations, hundreds of head of cattle and dozens of employees and workers, is to retain *a great estate farmed on capitalist lines*. The S.R. Party has indeed cheated the peasants with exceptional brazenness.

Landed estates, or "privately held land", as the bill puts it, are to be transferred to the lease pool by *land committees* set up under the law of April 21, 1917, by the government of *landed proprietors* headed by *Prince Lvov* and Co., the selfsame government of Milyukov and Guchkov, the imperialists and plunderers of the masses, who were routed by the workers' and soldiers' movement in Petrograd on April 20 and 21, i.e., a full six months ago.

The land committee law issued by this government of landed proprietors is, of course, far from being a democratic (popular) law. On the contrary, it contains a whole series of outrageous departures from democracy. Take its Clause 11, which gives the "gubernia* land committees the right to suspend decisions of the volost and uyezd committees, pending a final ruling by the central land committee". Under this swindling landowners' law, the committees are so constituted that the uyezd committee is less democratic than the volost committee, the gubernia committee is less democratic than the uyezd committee, and the central committee is less democratic than the gubernia committee.

The volost land committee is entirely elected by the population of the volost. Under the law, for instance, the uyezd committee must include the local magistrate and five members of "provisional executive committees" (pending the

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* *Gubernia*, *uyezd*, *volost*—Russian administrative territorial units. The largest of these was the gubernia, divided into uyezds, which in turn were subdivided into volosts. This system continued under Soviet power until the introduction of the new system of administrative territorial divisions in 1929-30.—*Ed*.

establishment of a new local government body). The gubernia committee includes a member of the circuit court and a magistrate, and also a representative of the ministry who is *appointed* by the minister, etc. The central land committee consists of 27 members "invited to sit on it by the Provisional Government"! This includes one each from the 11 political parties, with the majority (6 out of 11) going to *the Cadets and those to the right of them*. Isn't this an obvious swindle on the part of Lvov, Shingaryov (who signed the bill) and their friends? Isn't this simply flouting democracy to please the landed proprietors?

Does this not bear out the repeated Bolshevik statement that the will of the peasantry can be correctly expressed and implemented only by the *Soviets of Peasants' Deputies*, elected *by the mass of working people* and subject to recall at any time?

The Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were returned in a majority to the All-Russia Executive Committee of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies by the unsuspecting peasants, have now *betrayed* them; they have *sold out* the peasant Soviets, *gone over to the landowners*, and accepted the land committee law of Prince Lvov, the landed proprietor. Therein lies the second big fraud which the Socialist-Revolutionaries have worked on the peasants.

This makes it all the more imperative for us, the workers' party, to reiterate the Bolshevik demand: all power in the countryside to the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Agricultural Labourers' Deputies!

The peasant mandates demand the confiscation, that is, the alienation of landed estates *without compensation*, and the confiscation of stud farms, private pedigree stock-breeding and poultry farms, the transfer to state use of all highly efficient farms, and the confiscation of all livestock and implements on the landed estates.

Instead, the S.R. ministerial bill treats the peasants to *a preservation of rent*, which is still to go into landlords' coffers.

"Rent," says Clause 33 of the S.R. bill, "shall be paid to the committees, which shall hand over the remainder [after various payments to the Treasury, etc.] to the rightful owner."

That is how the "Socialist-Revolutionaries", having cheated the peasants with fine promises, now present them with a *landowner-Cadet* land bill!

This is a swindle, pure and simple.

Nothing at all remains of the peasant demand for confiscation. This is not confiscation of landed estates, but *consolidation* of landed property by a "republican" government which *assures* the landowners *retention* of both implements and land for the maintenance of their "employees and workers", the retention of land "designated by the landowner [it's as easy as that!] for the planting of sugar-beet and other industrial crops", *and of payment* for the rest of the land which goes into the lease pool. The land committees are turned into *rent collectors* for the landed gentry!

The Socialist-Revolutionaries do not abolish but consolidate landed property. It is now abundantly clear that they have betrayed the peasants and have defected to the landowners.

The sly Cadets, these loyal friends of the capitalists and landowners, must not be allowed to bring off their fraud. The Cadets make believe that the S.R. bill is terribly "revolutionary", and there is a great outcry in all the bourgeois papers *against* it; they all report "*opposition*" on the part of the bourgeois ministers (and, of course, of their avowed hangers-on like Kerensky) to this "terrible" bill. The whole thing is a farce, a game; it is the bartering of a trader who expects to drive a harder bargain with the spineless Socialist-Revolutionaries. Actually, Maslov's is a *landowners*' bill drawn up *for the express purpose* of securing an agreement with them and saving them.

It is pure humbug for *Dyelo Naroda* to declare, as it does in these issues, that it is "an outstanding land bill inaugurating [!] a great [!!] reform in socialising [!!!] land". There is no trace of "socialisation" in the bill (save perhaps for the "social" help given the landlord in assuring him of his rent); there is not the least trace of anything "revolutionary or democratic"; there is in fact nothing at all in it with the exception of the Irish-type "reforms"[94] which are a common feature of European *bourgeois reformism*.

Let me say this again: it is a bill *to save* the landowners, and *to* "*pacify*" the incipient peasant uprising by making

concessions on trifles and allowing the landowners to keep what is important.

The fact that the Socialist-Revolutionaries have submitted such a mean bill to the government really shows the' incredible hypocrisy of those who accuse the Bolsheviks of 'frustrating" the Constituent Assembly with their plans for transferring power to the Soviets. "Only 40 days till the Constituent Assembly"—Cadets, capitalists, landowners, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, all have joined in this hypocritical cry. Meanwhile, they slip the government a sweeping land bill, *swindling* the peasants, *saddling* them with landlords, *consolidating* landed property.

When it comes to supporting the landowners against the mounting peasant uprising, a sweeping bill *can* be rushed through 40 and even 30 days before the Constituent Assembly is due to meet.

When it comes to transferring all power to the Soviets *in order* to hand over *all* the land to the peasants, *at once* abolish landed property and *at once* offer a just peace, then Cadets, capitalists, landowners, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries all join in the howl against the Bolsheviks.

The peasants must know how they have been cheated and betrayed to the landowners by the Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

The peasants must know that it is only the *workers*' party, the *Bolsheviks*, who are prepared to stand to the last for the interests of the *poor* peasants and *all* working people *against* the capitalists and the landowners.

October 20, 1917.

Published on November 6 October 24), 1927, in *Rabochy Put* No. 44 Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the newspaper text

LETTER TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS[95]

Comrades,

I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.

With all my might I urge comrades to realise that everything now hangs by a thread; that we are confronted by problems which are not to be solved by conferences or congresses (even congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed people.

The bourgeois onslaught of the Kornilovites and the removal of Verkhovsky[96] show that we must not wait. We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, having first disarmed the officer cadets (defeating them, if they resist), and so on.

We must not wait! We may lose everything!

The value of the immediate seizure of power will be the defence of the *people* (not of the congress, but of the people, the army and the peasants in the first place) from the Kornilovite government, which has driven out Verkhovsky and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.

Who must take power?

That is not important at present. Let the Revolutionary Military Committee[97] do it, or "some other institution" which will declare that it will relinquish power only to the true representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the army (the immediate proposal of peace), the interests of the peasants (the land to be taken imme-

diately and private property abolished), the interests of the starving.

All districts, all regiments, all forces must be mobilised at once and must immediately send their delegations to the Revolutionary Military Committee and to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent demand that under no circumstances should power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night.

History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything.

If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Soviets but on their behalf.

The seizure of power is the business of the uprising; its political purpose will become clear after the seizure.

It would be a disaster, or a sheer formality, to await the wavering vote of October 25. The people have the right and are in duty bound to decide such questions not by a vote, but by force; in critical moments of revolution, the people have the right and are in duty bound to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.

This is proved by the history of all revolutions; and it would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the chance slip, knowing that the *salvation of the revolution*, the offer of peace, the salvation of Petrograd, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants depend upon them.

The government is tottering. It must be *given the deathblow* at all costs.

To delay action is fatal.

Written on October 24 (November 6), 1917

Published according to a typewritten copy

First published in 1924

TO THE CITIZENS OF RUSSIA![98]

The Provisional Government has been deposed. State power has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—the Revolutionary Military Committee, which heads the Petrograd proletariat and the garrison.

The cause for which the people have fought, namely, the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet power—this cause has been secured.

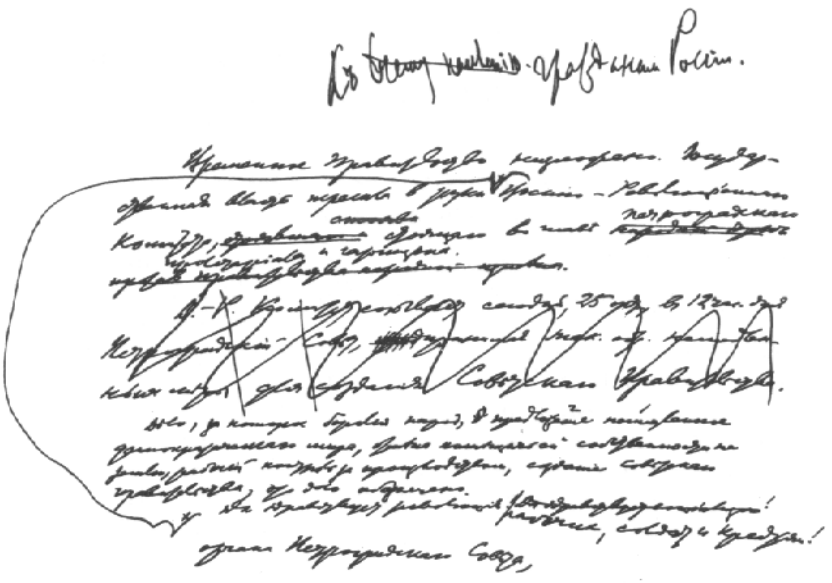
Long live the revolution of workers, soldiers and peasants!

Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

10 a.m., October 25, 1917.

Rabochy i Soldat No. 8, October 25 (November 7), 1917

Published according to the newspaper text verified with the manuscript



Facsimile of the manuscript of “To the Citizens of Russia!”, written by Lenin on October 25 (November 1), 1917

Reduced

Facsimile of the manuscript of "To the Citizens of Russia!", written by Lenin on October 25 (November 1), 1917

Reduced

MEETING OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES OCTOBER 25 (NOVEMBER 7), 1917[99]

1
REPORT ON THE TASKS OF THE SOVIET POWER

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Comrades, the workers' and peasants' revolution, about the necessity of which the Bolsheviks have always spoken, has been accomplished.

What is the significance of this workers' and peasants' revolution? Its significance is, first of all, that we shall have a Soviet government, our own organ of power, in which the bourgeoisie will have no share whatsoever. The oppressed masses will themselves create a power. The old state apparatus will be shattered to its foundations and a new administrative apparatus set up in the form of the Soviet organisations.

From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism.

One of our urgent tasks is to put an immediate end to the war. It is clear to everybody that in order to end this war, which is closely bound up with the present capitalist system, capital itself must be fought.

We shall be helped in this by the world working-class movement, which is already beginning to develop in Italy, Britain and Germany.

The proposal we make to international democracy for a just and immediate peace will everywhere awaken an ardent response among the international proletarian masses. All the secret treaties[100] must be immediately published in order to strengthen the confidence of the proletariat.

Within Russia a huge section of the peasantry have said that they have played long enough with the capitalists, and will now march with the workers. A single decree putting an end to landed proprietorship will win us the confidence of the peasants. The peasants will understand that the salvation of the peasantry lies only in an alliance with the workers. We shall institute genuine workers' control over production.

We have now learned to make a concerted effort. The revolution that has just been accomplished is evidence of this. We possess the strength of mass organisation, which will overcome everything and lead the proletariat to the world revolution.

We must now set about building a proletarian socialist state in Russia.

Long live the world socialist revolution! (*Stormy applause*.)

2
RESOLUTION

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies hails the victorious revolution of the proletariat and the garrison of Petrograd. The Soviet particularly emphasises the solidarity, organisation, discipline and complete unanimity displayed by the masses in this unusually bloodless and unusually successful uprising.

It is the unshakable conviction of the Soviet that the workers' and peasants' government which will be created by the revolution, as a Soviet government, and which will ensure the urban proletariat the support of the whole mass of the poor peasantry, will firmly advance towards socialism, the only means of saving the country from the untold miseries and horrors of war.

The new workers' and peasants' government will immediately propose a just and democratic peace to all belligerent nations.

It will immediately abolish landed proprietorship and hand over the land to the peasants. It will institute workers' control over the production and distribution of goods and establish national control over the banks, at the same time transforming them into a single state enterprise.

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies calls on all workers and all peasants to support the workers' and peasants' revolution devotedly and with all their energy. The Soviet expresses the conviction that the urban workers, in alliance with the poor peasants, will display strict,

comradely discipline and establish the strictest revolutionary order, which is essential for the victory of socialism.

The Soviet is convinced that the proletariat of the West-European countries will help us to achieve a complete and lasting victory for the cause of socialism.

Izvestia No. 207,
October 26, 1917

Published according
to the *Izvestia* text

SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES[101]

OCTOBER 25-26 (NOVEMBER 7-8), 1917

SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS, AND SOLDIERS, DEPUTIES[101]

OCTOBER 25-26 (NOVEMBER 7-8), 1917

ЕЖЕДНЕВНАЯ ВЕЧЕРНЯЯ ГАЗЕТА

РАБОЧІЙ и СОЛДАТЪ

Органъ Петроградскаго Совѣта Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ.

№ 9. Четвергъ, 26 Октября (8 ноября нов. ст.) 1917 года. № 9.

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РАБОЧИМЪ, СОЛДАТАМЪ и КРЕСТЬЯНАМЪ!

Второй Всероссійскій Съѣздъ Совѣтовъ Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ открылся. На немъ представлено громадное большинство Совѣтовъ. На съѣздѣ присутствуетъ и рядъ делегатовъ отъ крестьянскихъ Совѣтовъ. Полномочія соглашательскаго Ц. И. К. окончились. Опираясь на волю громаднаго большинства рабочихъ, солдатъ и крестьянъ, опираясь на совершившееся въ Петроградѣ побѣдоносное возстаніе рабочихъ и гарнизона, Съѣздъ беретъ власть въ свои руки.

Временное Правительство низложено. Большинство членовъ Временнаго Правительства уже арестовано.

Совѣтская власть предложитъ немедленный демократическій миръ всѣмъ народамъ и немедленное перемиріе на всѣхъ фронтахъ. Она обезпечиваетъ безвозмездную передачу помѣщичьихъ, удѣльныхъ и монастырскихъ земель въ распоряженіе крестьянскихъ комитетовъ, отстоитъ права солдатъ, проведя полную демократизацію арміи, установитъ рабочій контроль надъ производствомъ, обезпечитъ своевременный созывъ Учредительнаго Собранія, озаботится доставкой хлѣба въ города и предметовъ первой необходимости въ деревню, обезпечитъ всѣмъ націямъ, населяющимъ Россію, подлинное право на самоопредѣленіе.

Съѣздъ постановляетъ: вся власть на мѣстахъ переходитъ къ Совѣтамъ Рабочихъ, Солдатскихъ и Крестьянскихъ депутатовъ, которые и должны обезпечить подлинный революціонный порядокъ.

Съѣздъ призываетъ солдатъ къ окопахъ къ бдительности и стойкости. Съѣздъ Совѣтовъ увѣренъ, что революціонная армія сумѣетъ защитить революцію отъ всякихъ посягательствъ имперіализма, пока новое правительство не добьется заключенія демократическаго мира, который оно непосредственно предложитъ всѣмъ народамъ. Новое Правительство приметъ всѣ мѣры къ тому, чтобы обезпечить революціонную армію всѣмъ необходимымъ, путемъ рѣшительной политики реквизицій и обложенія имущихъ классовъ, а также улучшитъ положеніе солдатскихъ семей.

Корниловцы — Керенскій, Калединъ и др. дѣлаютъ попытки вести войска на Петроградъ. Нѣсколько отрядовъ, обманнымъ путемъ двинутыхъ Керенскимъ, перешли на сторону возставшаго народа.

Солдаты, окажите активное противодѣйствіе корниловцу Керенскому! Будьте на сторожѣ!

Желѣзнодорожники, останавливайте всѣ эшелоны, посылаемые Керенскимъ на Петроградъ!

Солдаты, рабочіе, служащіе,—въ вашихъ рукахъ судьба революціи и судьба демократическаго мира!

ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТЪ РЕВОЛЮЦІЯ!

Всероссійскій Съѣздъ Совѣтовъ Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ. Делегаты отъ Крестьянскихъ Совѣтовъ.

First page of the newspaper Rabochy i Soldat No. 9, October 26 (November 8), 1917

Reduced

First page of the newspaper Rabochy i Soldat No. 9, October 26 (November 8), 1917

Reduced

1
TO WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS!

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has opened. The vast majority of the Soviets are represented at the Congress. A number of delegates from the Peasants' Soviets are also present. The mandate of the compromising Central Executive Committee has terminated.[102] Backed by the will of the vast majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes power into its own hands.

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The majority of the members of the Provisional Government have already been arrested.

The Soviet government will propose an immediate democratic peace to all the nations and an immediate armistice on all fronts. It will secure the transfer of the land of the landed proprietors, the crown and the monasteries to the peasant committees without compensation; it will protect the rights of the soldiers by introducing complete democracy in the army; it will establish workers' control over production; it will ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the time appointed; it will see to it that bread is supplied to the cities and prime necessities to the villages; it will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right to self-determination.

The Congress decrees: all power in the localities shall pass to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which must guarantee genuine revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be vigilant and firm. The Congress of Soviets is convinced that the revolutionary army will be able to defend the revolution against all attacks of imperialism until such time as the new government succeeds in concluding a democratic peace, which it will propose directly to all peoples. The new government will do everything to fully supply the revolutionary army by means of a determined policy of requisitions and taxation of the propertied classes, and also will improve the condition of soldiers' families.

The Kornilov men—Kerensky, Kaledin and others—are attempting to bring troops against Petrograd. Several detachments, whom Kerensky had moved by deceiving them, have come over to the side of the insurgent people.

Soldiers, actively resist Kerensky the Kornilovite! Be on your guard!

Railwaymen, hold up all troop trains dispatched by Kerensky against Petrograd!

Soldiers, workers in factory and office, the fate of the revolution and the fate of the democratic peace is in your hands!

Long live the revolution!

The All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

The Delegates from the Peasants' Soviets

Written on October 25 (November 7), 1917

Published in the newspaper *Rabochy i Soldat* No. 9, October 26 (November 8), 1917

Published according to the newspaper text

2
REPORT ON PEACE, OCTOBER 26 (NOVEMBER 8)

The question of peace is a burning question, the painful question of the day. Much has been said and written on the subject, and all of you, no doubt, have discussed it quite a lot. Permit me, therefore, to proceed to read a declaration which the government you elect should publish.

DECREE ON PEACE

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and other working people of all the belligerent countries,[103] exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposes that this kind of peace be immediately concluded by all the belligerent nations, and expresses its readiness to take all the resolute measures now, without the least delay, pending the final ratification of all the terms of such a peace by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations,

In accordance with the sense of justice of democrats in general, and of the working classes in particular, the government conceives the annexation or seizure of foreign lands to mean every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time when such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the borders of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protests and uprisings against national oppression—it is not accorded the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, i.e., seizure and violence.

The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war over the issue of how to divide among the strong and rich nations the weak nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the terms indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception.

At the same time the government declares that it does not regard the above-mentioned peace terms as an ultimatum; in other words, it is prepared to consider any other peace terms, and insists only that they be advanced by any of the belligerent countries as speedily as possible, and that in the peace proposals there should be absolute clarity and the complete absence of all ambiguity and secrecy.

The government abolishes secret diplomacy, and, for its part, announces its firm intention to conduct all negotiations quite openly in full view of the whole people. It will proceed immediately with the full publication of the secret treaties endorsed or concluded by the government of land-

owners and capitalists from February to October 25, 1917. The government proclaims the unconditional and immediate annulment of everything contained in these secret treaties insofar as it is aimed, as is mostly the case, at securing advantages and privileges for the Russian landowners and capi alists and at the retention, or extension, of the annexations made by the Great Russians.

Proposing to the governments and peoples of all countries immediately to begin open negotiations for peace, the government, for its part, expresses its readiness to conduct these negotiations in writing, by telegraph, and by negotiations between representatives of the various countries, or at a conference of such representatives. In order to facilitate such negotiations, the government is appointing its plenipotentiary representative to neutral countries.

The government proposes an immediate armistice to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, and, for its part, considers it desirable that this armistice should be concluded for a period of not less than three months, i.e., a period long enough to permit the completion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples or nations, without exception, involved in or compelled to take part in the war, and the summoning of authoritative assemblies of the representatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the peace terms.

While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia appeals in particular also to the class-conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind and the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany. The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and socialism; they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England, a number of revolutions of historic importance effected by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany[104] and the prolonged, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organisations in Germany, a work which serves as a model to the workers of the whole world. All these examples of proletar-

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

ian heroism and historical creative work are a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now faces them of saving mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences, that these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely vigorous action, will help us to conclude peace successfully, and at the same time emancipate the labouring and exploited masses of our population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation.

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the support of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, must start immediate negotiations for peace. Our appeal must be addressed both to the governments and to the peoples. We cannot ignore the governments, for that would delay the possibility of concluding peace, and the people's government dare not do that, but we have no right not to appeal to the peoples at the same time. Everywhere there are differences between the governments and the peoples, and we must therefore help the peoples to intervene in questions of war and peace. We will, of course, insist upon the whole of our programme for a peace without annexations and indemnities. We shall not retreat from it; but we must not give our enemies an opportunity to say that their conditions are different from ours and that therefore it is useless to start negotiations with us. No, we must deprive them of that advantageous position and not present our terms in the form of an ultimatum. Therefore the point is included that we are willing to consider any peace terms and all proposals. We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them. We shall submit them for consideration to the Constituent Assembly which will have the power to decide what concessions can and what cannot be made. We are combating the deception practised by governments which pay lip-service to peace and justice, but in fact wage annexationist and predatory wars. No government will say all it thinks. We, however, are opposed to secret diplomacy and will act openly in full view of the whole people. We do not close our eyes to difficulties and never have done. War cannot be ended by refusal, it cannot be

ended by one side. We are proposing an armistice for three months, but shall not reject a shorter period, so that the exhausted army may breathe freely, even if only for a little while; moreover, in all the civilised countries national assemblies must be summoned for the discussion of the terms.

In proposing an immediate armistice, we appeal to the class-conscious workers of the countries that have done so much for the development of the proletarian movement. We appeal to the workers of Britain, where there was the Chartist movement, to the workers of France, who have in repeated uprisings displayed the strength of their class consciousness, and to the workers of Germany, who waged the fight against the Anti-Socialist Law and have created powerful organisations.

In the Manifesto of March 14,[105] we called for the overthrow of the bankers, but, far from overthrowing our own bankers, we entered into an alliance with them. Now we have overthrown the government of the bankers.

The governments and the bourgeoisie will make every effort to unite their forces and drown the workers' and peasants' revolution in blood. But the three years of war have been a good lesson to the masses—the Soviet movement in other countries and the mutiny in the German navy, which was crushed by the officer cadets of Wilhelm the hangman.[106] Finally, we must remember that we are not living in the depths of Africa, but in Europe, where news can spread quickly.

The workers' movement will triumph and will pave the way to peace and socialism. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Izvestia No. 208, October 27, 1917, and *Pravda* No. 171, November 10 (October 28), 1917

Report published according to the *Pravda* text, decree according to the *Izvestia* text

3
CONCLUDING SPEECH FOLLOWING THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT ON PEACE
OCTOBER 26 (NOVEMBER 8)

I shall not touch on the general character of the declaration. The government which your Congress sets up may amend unessential points.

I shall vigorously oppose lending our demand for peace the form of an ultimatum. An ultimatum may prove fatal to our whole cause. We cannot demand that, since some insignificant departure from our demands on the part of the imperialist governments would give them the opportunity of saying that it was impossible to enter into negotiations for peace because of our irreconcilability.

We shall send out our appeal everywhere, it will be made known to everybody. It will be impossible to conceal the terms proposed by our workers' and peasants' government.

It will be impossible to hush up our workers' and peasants' revolution, which has overthrown the government of bankers and landowners.

The governments may not reply to an ultimatum; they will have to reply to the text as we formulate it. Let everyone know what their governments have in mind. We do not want any secrets. We want a government to be always under the supervision of the public opinion of its country.

What will the peasant of some remote province say if, owing to our insistence on ultimatums, he will not know what another government wants? He will say: Comrades, why did you rule out the possibility of any peace terms being proposed? I would have discussed them, I would have examined them, and would then have instructed my representatives in the Constituent Assembly how to act. I am prepared to fight by revolutionary methods for just terms if the governments do not agree, but there might be such terms for some

countries that I would be prepared to recommend their governments to go on fighting by themselves. The full realisation of our ideas depends solely on the overthrow of the entire capitalist system. This is what the peasant might say to us, and he would accuse us of being excessively uncompromising over trifles, when for us the main thing is to expose all the vileness, all the baseness of the bourgeoisie and of its crowned and uncrowned hangmen at the head of the government.

We should not and must not give the governments an opportunity of taking refuge behind our uncompromising attitude and of concealing from the peoples the reason why they are being sent to the shambles. This is a tiny drop, but we should not and must not reject this drop, which will wear away the stone of bourgeois conquest. An ultimatum would make the position of our opponents easier. But we shall make all the terms known to the people. We shall confront all the governments with our terms, and let them give an answer to their people. We shall submit all peace proposals to the Constituent Assembly for decision.

There is still another point, comrades, to which you must pay the most careful attention. The secret treaties must be published. The clauses dealing with annexations and indemnities must be annulled. There are various clauses, comrades—the predatory governments, you know, not only made agreements between themselves on plunder, but among them they also included economic agreements and various other clauses on good-neighbourly relations.

We shall not bind ourselves by treaties. We shall not allow ourselves to be entangled by treaties. We reject all clauses on plunder and violence, but we shall welcome all clauses containing provisions for good-neighbourly relations and all economic agreements; we cannot reject these. We propose an armistice for three months; we choose a lengthy period because the peoples are exhausted, the peoples long for a respite from this bloody shambles that has lasted over three years. We must realise that the peoples should be given an opportunity to discuss the peace terms and to express their will with parliament participating, and this takes time. We demand a lengthy armistice, so that the soldiers in the trenches may enjoy a respite from this night-

mare of constant slaughter; but we shall not reject proposals for a shorter armistice; we shall examine them, and it is incumbent upon us to accept them, even if we are offered an armistice of a month or a month and a half. Nor must our proposal for an armistice have the form of an ultimatum, for we shall not give our enemies an opportunity of concealing the whole truth from the peoples, using our irreconcilability as a pretext. It must not be in the form of an ultimatum, for a government is criminal that does not desire an armistice. If we do not put our proposal for an armistice in the form of an ultimatum, we shall thereby show the peoples that the governments are criminal, and the peoples will not stand on ceremony with such criminals. The objection is raised that by not resorting to an ultimatum we are displaying weakness, but it is time to cast aside all bourgeois cant when speaking of the strength of the people. According to the bourgeois conception, there is strength when the people go blindly to the slaughter in obedience to the imperialist governments. The bourgeoisie admit a state to be strong only when it can, by the power of the government apparatus, hurl the people wherever the bourgeois rulers want them hurled. Our idea of strength is different. Our idea is that a state is strong when the people are politically conscious. It is strong when the people know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously. We need not fear to tell the truth about fatigue, for what state today is not tired, what nation does not talk about it openly? Take Italy, where, owing to this tiredness, there was a prolonged revolutionary movement demanding the termination of the slaughter. Are there not mass demonstrations of workers in Germany that put forward a demand for the termination of the war? Was it not fatigue that provoked the mutiny in the German navy that was so ruthlessly suppressed by that hangman, Wilhelm, and his hirelings? If such things are possible in so disciplined a country as Germany, where they are beginning to talk about fatigue and about putting an end to the war, we need not fear to say the same openly, because it is the truth, equally true both of our country and of all the belligerent and even non-belligerent countries.

Pravda No. 171,
November 10 (October 28), 1917

Published according to
the *Pravda* text

4
REPORT ON LAND
OCTOBER 26 (NOVEMBER 8)

We maintain that the revolution has proved and demonstrated how important it is that the land question should be put clearly. The outbreak of the armed uprising, the second, October, Revolution, clearly proves that the land must be turned over to the peasants. The government that has been overthrown and the compromising parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries committed a crime when they kept postponing the settlement of the land question on various pretexts and thereby brought the country to economic chaos and a peasant revolt. Their talk about riots and anarchy in the countryside sounds false, cowardly, and deceitful. Where and when have riots and anarchy been provoked by wise measures? If the government had acted wisely, and if their measures had met the needs of the poor peasants, would there have been unrest among the peasant masses? But all the measures of the government, approved by the Avksentyev and Dan Soviets, went counter to the interests of the peasants and compelled them to revolt.

Having provoked the revolt, the government raised a hue and cry about riots and anarchy, for which they themselves were responsible. They were going to crush it by blood and iron, but were themselves swept away by the armed uprising of the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers. The first duty of the government of the workers' and peasants' revolution must be to settle the land question, which can pacify and satisfy the vast masses of poor peasants. I shall read to you the clauses of a decree your Soviet Government

must issue. In one of the clauses of this decree is embodied the Mandate to the Land Committees, compiled on the basis of 242 mandates from local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

DECREE ON LAND

(1) Landed proprietorship is abolished forthwith without any compensation.

(2) The landed estates, as also all crown, monastery, and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the volost land committees and the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

(3) All damage to confiscated property, which henceforth belongs to the whole people, is proclaimed a grave crime to be punished by the revolutionary courts. The uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies shall take all necessary measures to assure the observance of the strictest order during the confiscation of the landed estates, to determine the size of estates, and the particular estates subject to confiscation, to draw up exact inventories of all property confiscated and to protect in the strictest revolutionary way all agricultural enterprises transferred to the people, with all buildings, implements, livestock, stocks of produce, etc.

(4) The following peasant Mandate, compiled by the newspaper *Izvestia Vserossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov*[107] from 242 local peasant mandates and published in No. 88 of that paper (Petrograd, No. 88, August 19, 1917), shall serve everywhere to guide the implementation of the great land reforms until a final decision on the latter is taken by the Constituent Assembly.

Peasant Mandate on the Land

"The land question in its full scope can be settled only by the popular Constituent Assembly.

"The most equitable settlement of the land question is to be as follows:

"(1) *Private ownership of land shall be abolished for ever*; land shall not be sold purchased, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated.

"All land, whether *state*, *crown*, *monastery*, *church*, *factory*, *entailed*, *private*, *public*, *peasant*, *etc.*, *shall be confiscated without compen-*

sation and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the use of all those who cultivate it.

"Persons who suffer by this property revolution shall be deemed to be entitled to public support only for the period necessary for adaptation to the new conditions of life.

"(2) All mineral wealth—ore, oil, coal, salt, etc., and also all forests and waters of state importance, shall pass into the exclusive use of the state. All the small streams, lakes, woods, etc., shall pass into the use of the communes, to be administered by the local self-government bodies.

"(3) Lands on which *high-level scientific* farming is practised—orchards, plantations, seed plots, nurseries, hothouses, etc.—*shall not be divided up*, *but shall be converted into model farms*, to be turned over for exclusive use *to the state or to the communes*, depending on he size and importance of such lands.

"Household land in towns and villages, with orchards and vegetable gardens, shall be reserved for the use of their present owners, the size of the holdings, and the size of tax levied for the use thereof, to be determined by law.

"(4) Stud farms, government and private pedigree stock and poultry farms, etc., shall be confiscated and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune depending on the size and importance of such farms.

"The question of compensation shall be examined by the Constituent Assembly.

"(5) All livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid for this.

"The farm implements of peasants with little land shall not be subject to confiscation.

"(6) The right to use the land shall be accorded to all citizens of the Russian state (without distinction of sex) desiring to cultivate it by their own labour, with the help of their families, or in partnership, but only as long as they are able to cultivate it. The employment of hired labour is not permitted.

"In the event of the temporary physical disability of any member of a village commune for a period of up to two years, the village commune shall be obliged to assist him for this period by collectively cultivating his land until he is again able to work.

"Peasants who, owing to old age or ill-health, are permanently disabled and unable to cultivate the land personally, shall lose their right to the use of it but, in return, shall receive a pension from the state.

"(7) Land tenure shall be on an equality basis, i.e. the land shall be distributed among the working people in conformity with a labour standard or a subsistence standard,[108] depending on local conditions.

"There shall be absolutely no restriction on the forms of land tenure—household, farm, communal, or co-operative, as shall be decided in each individual village and settlement.

"(8) All land, when alienated, shall become part of the national land fund. Its distribution among the peasants shall be in charge of the local and central self-government bodies, from democratically organised village and city communes, in which there are no distinctions of social rank, to central regional government bodies.

"The land fund shall be subject to periodical redistribution depending on the growth of population and the increase in the productivity and the scientific level of farming.

"When the boundaries of allotments are altered, the original nucleus of the allotment shall be left intact.

"The land of the members who leave the commune shall revert to the land fund, preferential right to such land shall be given to the near relatives of the members who have left, or to persons designated by the latter.

"The cost of fertilisers and improvements put into the land, to the extent that they have not been fully used up at the time the allotment is returned to the land fund shall be compensated.

"Should the available land fund in a particular district prove inadequate for the needs of the local population, the surplus population shall he settled elsewhere.

"The state shall take upon itself the organisation of resettlement and shall bear the cost thereof, as well as the cost of supplying implements, etc.

"Resettlement shall be effected in the following order: landless peasants desiring to resettle, then members of the commune who are of vicious habits, deserters, and so on, and, finally, by lot or by agreement."

The entire contents of this Mandate, as expressing the absolute will of the vast majority of the class-conscious peasants of all Russia, is proclaimed a provisional law, which, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, shall be carried into effect as far as possible immediately, and as to certain of its provisions with due gradualness, as shall be determined by the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

(5) The land of ordinary peasants and ordinary Cossacks shall not be confiscated.

Voices are being raised here that the decree itself and the Mandate were drawn up by the Socialist-Revolutionaries. What of it? Does it matter who drew them up? As a democratic government, we cannot ignore the decision of the masses of the people, even though we may disagree with it. In the fire of experience, applying the decree in practice, and

carrying it out locally, the peasants will themselves realise where the truth lies. And even if the peasants continue to follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, even if they give this party a majority in the Constituent Assembly, we shall still say—what of it? Experience is the best teacher and it will show who is right. Let the peasants solve this problem from one end and we shall solve it from the other. Experience will oblige us to draw together in the general stream of revolutionary creative work, in the elaboration of new state forms. We must be guided by experience; we must allow complete freedom to the creative faculties of the masses. The old government, which was overthrown by armed uprising, wanted to settle the land problem with the help of the old, unchanged tsarist bureaucracy. But instead of solving the problem, the bureaucracy only fought the peasants. The peasants have learned something during the eight months of our revolution; they want to settle all land problems themselves. We are therefore opposed to all amendments to this draft law. We want no details in it, for we are writing a decree, not a programme of action. Russia is vast, and local conditions vary. We trust that the peasants themselves will be able to solve the problem correctly, properly, better than we could do it. Whether they do it in our spirit or in the spirit of the Socialist-Revolutionary programme is not the point. The point is that the peasants should be firmly assured that there are no more landowners in the countryside, that they themselves must decide all questions, and that they themselves must arrange their own lives. (*Loud applause.*)

Izvestia No. 209, October 28, 1917 and *Pravda* No. 171, November 10 (October 28), 1917

Report published according to the *Pravda* text, decree according to the *Izvestia* text

5
DECISION TO FORM THE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT

The All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies resolves:

To establish a provisional workers' and peasants' government, to be known as the Council of People's Commissars, to govern the country until the Constituent Assembly is convened. The management of individual branches of state activity is entrusted to commissions whose members shall ensure the fulfilment of the programme announced by the Congress, and shall work in close contact with mass organisations of men and women workers, sailors, soldiers, peasants and office employees. Governmental authority is vested in a collegium of the chairmen of those commissions, i.e., the Council of People's Commissars.

Control over the activities of the People's Commissars with the right to replace them is vested in the All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies and its Central Executive Committee.

At the present time the Council of People's Commissars is constituted as follows:

Chairman of the Council—*Vladimir Ulyanov* (*Lenin*);
People's Commissar of the Interior—*A. I. Rykov*;
Agriculture—*V. P. Milyutin*;
Labour—*A. G. Shlyapnikov*;
Army and Navy Affairs—a committee consisting of: *V. A. Ovseyenko* (*Antonov*), *N. V. Krylenko and P. Y. Dybenko*;
Commerce and Industry—*V. P. Nogin*;
Education—*A. V. Lunacharsky*;

Finance—*I. I. Skvortsov* (*Stepanov*);
Foreign Affairs—*L. D. Bronstein* (*Trotsky*);
Justice—*G. I. Oppokov* (*Lomov*);
Food—*I. A. Teodorovich*;
Posts and Telegraph—*N. P. Avilov* (*Glebov*);
Chairman for Nationalities Affairs—*J. V. Jugashvili* (*Stalin*).

The office of People's Commissar of Railways is temporarily vacant.

Written on October 26
(November 8), 1917

Published in the newspaper
Rabochy i Soldat No. 10,
October 27 (November 9), 1917

Published according
to the newspaper text

DRAFT REGULATIONS ON WORKERS' CONTROL[109]

1. *Workers' control* over the production, storage, purchase and sale of all products and raw materials shall be introduced in all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural and other enterprises employing not less than five workers and office employees (together), or with an annual turnover of not less than 10,000 rubles.

2. Workers' control shall be exercised by all the workers and office employees of an enterprise, either directly, if the enterprise is small enough to permit it, or through their elected representatives, who shall be elected *immediately* at general meetings, at which minutes of the elections shall be taken and the names of those elected communicated to the government and to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

3. Unless permission is given by the elected representatives of the workers and office employees, the suspension of work of an enterprise or an industrial establishment of state importance (see Clause 7), or any change in its operation is strictly prohibited.

4. The elected representatives shall be given access to *all* books and documents and to *all* warehouses and stocks of materials, instruments and products, without exception.

5. The decisions of the elected representatives of the workers and office employees are binding upon the owners of enterprises and may be annulled only by trade unions and their congresses.

6. In all enterprises of state importance *all* owners and *all* representatives of the workers and office employees elected for the purpose of exercising workers' control

shall be answerable to the state for the maintenance of the strictest order and discipline and for the protection of property. Persons guilty of dereliction of duty, concealment of stocks, accounts, etc., shall be punished by the confiscation of the whole of their property and by imprisonment for a term of up to five years.

7. By enterprises of state importance are meant all enterprises working for defence, or in any way connected with the manufacture of articles necessary for the existence of the masses of the population.

8. More detailed rules on workers' control shall be drawn up by the local Soviets of Workers' Deputies and by conferences of factory committees, and also by committees of office employees at general meetings of their representatives.

Written on October 26 or 27 (November 8 or 9), 1917

First published in 1929 in the second and third editions of Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII

Published according to the manuscript

DIRECT-LINE CONVERSATION WITH HELSINGFORS OCTOBER 27 (NOVEMBER 9), 1917

1

CONVERSATION WITH A. L. SHEINMAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HELSINGFORS SOVIET OF DEPUTIES OF THE ARMY, NAVY AND WORKERS OF FINLAND

Are you authorised to speak on behalf of the Regional Army and Navy Committee?

Of course, I am.

Can you move the greatest possible number of destroyers and other warships to Petrograd at once?

Let me call the Tsentrobalt* Chairman, because this is a purely naval matter. What's new in Petrograd?

There is a report that Kerensky's troops have moved up and have taken Gatchina, and since a part of the Petrograd troops are tired, it is imperative that we have the strongest reinforcements as soon as possible.

Anything else?

Instead of the "anything else" I expected you to say you were ready to set out and fight.

That goes without saying: we have announced our decision and will, consequently, act up to it.

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* The Central Committee of the Baltic Fleet.—*Ed.*

Have you any stocks of rifles and machine-guns, and in what quantities?

Here is Mikhailov, Chairman of the Regional Committee's Military Department. He will tell you about the army in Finland.

2

CONVERSATION WITH MIKHAILOV, CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE ARMY, NAVY AND WORKERS OF FINLAND

How many men do you need?

As many as possible, but only loyal men who are ready to fight. How many such men have you?

All of 5,000. Those who will fight can be sent urgently.

If sent with all possible dispatch, how many hours will it take them to reach Petrograd for sure?

Twenty-four hours, from now, at the outside.

By the overland route?

By rail.

Can you supply them with rations?

Yes. There are plenty of rations. There are also about 35 machine-guns; we could also send a few field guns with their detachments without worsening the situation here.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic I insistently request you to start such dispatch at once, and also to tell me whether you are aware of the formation of the new government, and how the news has been met by your Soviets?

We heard about the government only from the papers. People over here are enthusiastic about power passing into the hands of the Soviets.

So, you say, the troops will set out at once, and will be supplied with rations?

That's right. We'll set about their dispatch right away and will supply them with rations. Here's the Tsentrobalt Deputy Chairman because Dybenko himself went to Petrograd at 10.00 p.m. today.

3

CONVERSATION WITH N. F. IZMAILOV, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF TSENTROBALT

How many destroyers and other warships can you send?

We can send the battleship *Republic* and two destroyers.

Will they also be supplied with rations from your end?

Our fleet has enough rations, and they will be supplied. I want to say I am sure the *Republic* and all the destroyers we send will do their duty in defending the revolution. Have no doubt about the dispatch of the armed forces. This will be fulfilled without fail.

In how many hours?

Eighteen, at the most. Is there any need to send them out now?

Yes. The government is absolutely convinced that there is need for their immediate dispatch so that the battleship could enter the Ship Canal as close to the shore as possible.

The battleship is a large vessel with 12-inch guns, and cannot anchor offshore: if it did it could be easily boarded and captured. This can be done by the destroyers, with their small-calibre guns and machine-guns- as for the battleship, it should be in the roads or close by, or near the cruiser *Aurora*, because its guns have a range of 25 versts*; in short let the sailors and their command handle this.

The destroyers must enter the Neva near the Rybatskoye village, in order to protect the Nikolayevskaya railway line and all the approaches to it.

Right, all this will be done. What else is there?

Is there a wireless telegraph on the *Republic* and can it communicate with Petrograd while on its way?

Not only on the *Republic*, but also on the destroyers, they can all communicate with the Eiffel Tower. Let me assure you that everything will be done well.

May we expect that the ships will set out immediately?

Yes, that is so. We shall issue urgent orders right away so that these ships will get to Petrograd in time.

Have you stocks of rifles and ammunition? Let's have everything you can spare.

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* 25 versts = 16.5 miles.—*Tr.*

There are some on the ships, but we shall let you have everything there is.

Good-bye. Good luck.

Good-bye. Was that you speaking? Will you tell me your name?

Lenin.

Good-bye. We're setting everything in motion.

First published in 1922
in the magazine *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 10

Published according
to the telegraph tape

CONFERENCE OF REGIMENTAL DELEGATES OF THE PETROGRAD GARRISON OCTOBER 29 (NOVEMBER 11), 1917[110]

NEWSPAPER REPORT

1
REPORT ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

The political situation does not warrant long speeches. The political question is now merging with the military question. It is all too clear that Kerensky has recruited the Kornilovites, and they are his only support. In Moscow they have seized the Kremlin, but they have no control over the suburbs, where the workers and the poor in general live. There is no one to back Kerensky at the front. Even those who are of two minds, like the members of the Railwaymen's Union, are speaking in favour of the Decrees on Peace and on Land.

The vast majority of workers, soldiers and peasants want a policy of peace.

This is not a Bolshevik policy. In no sense is it a "party" policy. It is the policy of the workers, soldiers and peasants, that is, the majority of the people. Nor are we implementing a Bolshevik programme on the land question, because there, too, our programme has been taken bodily from peasant mandates.

It is not our fault that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have gone. They were invited to share political power, but they want to sit on the fence until the fight against Kerensky is over.

We asked everyone to take part in the government. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries[111] said they wanted to support the Soviet Government's policy. They did not even dare voice disagreement with the new government's programme.

People in the provinces give credence to papers like *Dyelo Naroda*. Here everyone knows that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks went because they were

left in a minority. The men of the Petrograd garrison are aware of this. They know that we wanted a coalition Soviet government. We did not exclude anyone from the Soviet. If they do not want to work with us, so much the worse for them. The mass of soldiers and peasants will not follow the Mensheviks or the Socialist-Revolutionaries. I am sure that nine-tenths of any workers' or soldiers' meeting will be on our side.

Kerensky's bid is just as pathetic a gamble as Kornilov's. But the situation is a difficult one. Vigorous efforts must be made to get some order into the food situation, and put an end to the misery at the fronts. We cannot wait, nor can we tolerate Kerensky's mutiny a single day. If the Kornilovites launch another offensive, they will get what the mutinous officer cadets got today. The cadets have only themselves to blame. We took power almost without bloodshed. If there were any losses they were on our side. The entire people wanted the policy the new government is conducting. It did not borrow this policy from the Bolsheviks, but from the soldiers at the front, the peasants in the villages, and the workers in the towns.

The Decree on Workers' Control is to be issued presently. Let me say this again: the political situation is now reduced to a military one. We cannot allow Kerensky to win: if he did there would be no peace, no land, and no freedom. I am sure that the soldiers and workers of Petrograd, who have just brought off a victorious revolution, will be able to crush the Kornilovites. We have had our defects. There is no use denying it. We have had to pay for them. But they can be eliminated. Without losing a single hour, a single minute, we must get organised, and set up a headquarters, and we must do it today. Once organised, we are sure to win out within a few days, and possibly even earlier.

The government set up by the will of the workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies will not tolerate any nonsense from the Kornilovites.

The political and the military task is to set up a headquarters, to concentrate the material forces, and to provide the soldiers with all they need. If we are to go on from strength to strength, this must be done without wasting a single hour, nay, minute.

2
SPEECH ON ARMING THE TROOPS

The period of great chaos is at an end. A chief of staff has been appointed and this will be announced. The period of vacillation is over. We felt keenly the lack of military order and communications. It has now been established that there is a great deal of enthusiasm and unity among the troops. It is now up to you to take things in hand, personally verify every act, the execution of your orders and assignments, see whether the workers' organisations have been contacted, etc. The workers will help you in this matter. Let me give you some advice: you must check every report through the control commission or through the regimental delegates, without relying on others to see that orders are carried out, or to check reports on stocks. The best guarantee of success is to do all this yourself, to check everything, take account of all stocks and verify every step personally.

3
SPEECH ON RESTORING LAW AND ORDER IN THE CITY

I fully agree with what has been said: the workers must take a hand in guarding the city. As they do this together, the soldiers will teach the workers how to handle arms. The wholesale arming of the people and the abolition of the regular army is a task which we must not lose sight of for a single minute. If we recruit the working population the task will be much easier. The comrades' proposal that we meet every day is a practical one. It is true that the Russian revolution produces a great deal of what is novel, that has not occurred in any other revolution. For one thing, there have never been such organs as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. You must merge with the workers, they will give you everything the bourgeoisie has failed to give you. Every unit, together with the workers' organisation, must see to it that there is a stock of everything necessary for this war of yours, without waiting for pointers from above. We must tackle this task on our own tonight. The units must not wait for instructions from headquarters, they must make their own proposals. You have something the bourgeoisie have never bad: their only way is to buy; you can contact the workers who produce everything.

Pravda No. 174, November 13 (October 31), 1917

Published according to the *Pravda* text

WIRELESS MESSAGE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OCTOBER 30 (NOVEMBER 12), 1917

Calling Everyone

The All-Russia Congress of Soviets has set up a new Soviet Government. Kerensky's government has been overthrown and arrested. Kerensky has fled. All institutions are in the hands of the Soviet Government. A revolt of officer cadets who had been released on parole on October 25 broke out on October 29. The revolt was suppressed that same day. Kerensky and Savinkov, together with the officer cadets and a part of the Cossacks, have made their way by deceit to Tsarskoye Syelo. The Soviet Government has mustered forces for the suppression of the new Kornilov advance on Petrograd. The fleet, headed by the armoured battleship *Republic*, has been summoned to the capital. Kerensky's officer cadets and Cossacks are wavering. Prisoners arriving from Kerensky's camp assure us that the Cossacks have been deceived and that if they come to realise the true state of affairs they will refuse to shoot. The Soviet Government is making every effort to avert bloodshed. If bloodshed cannot be avoided and if Kerensky's units do begin to shoot, the Soviet Government will not hesitate to suppress the new Kerensky-Kornilov campaign ruthlessly.

We announce for your information that the Congress of Soviets which has already dispersed, adopted two important decrees: (1) on the immediate transfer of all the landed estates to the peasant committees, and (2) on the proposal of a democratic peace.

Vladimir Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Soviet Government

Izvestia No. 212,
October 31, 1917

Published according to the newspaper text

DRAFT RULES FOR OFFICE EMPLOYEES

1. All employees of state, public and large private industrial enterprises (employing at least five wage-workers) undertake to perform the business assigned to them, and not to leave their posts without special permission from the government, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, or trade unions.

2. Violation of the rule set forth in § 1, or negligence in the dispatch of business or presenting accounts to the government and organs of power, or in discharge of services for the public and the economy shall be punishable with confiscation of all the property of the offender and imprisonment for a term of up to five years.

Written at the end of October 1917

First published in 1928 in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECHES AT A MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) NOVEMBER 1 (14), 1917

MINUTES

1

Comrade Lenin considers that Kamenev's policy must be checked at once. There is now no point in negotiating with the Vikzhel.[112] Troops must be dispatched to Moscow. He proposes a resolution on the Vikzhel. The Vikzhel is not represented on the Soviet, and must not be admitted to it; the Soviets are voluntary organisations, and the Vikzhel has no support among the people.

2

Comrade Lenin considers that the negotiations were to serve as diplomatic cover for military operations. The only correct solution would be to put an end to the wavering of the waverers and to become firm ourselves. Assistance must be given to the Muscovites, and our victory will be assured.

3

Comrade Lenin considers the question a fundamental one, and thinks it is time to put an end to wavering. It is obvious that the Vikzhel sides with the Kaledins and Kornilovs. There must be no vacillation. We are backed by the majority of the workers and peasants and of the army. Nobody here has proved that the rank and file are against us. Either with the agents of Kaledin, or with the rank and file. We must rely on the people, we must send propagandists into the countryside. The Vikzhel was called upon to transport troops to Moscow; it refused, we must appeal to the people, and they will overthrow it.

First published in 1922
in *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 10

Published according to
a handwritten copy
of the Minutes

RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) ON THE OPPOSITION WITHIN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 2 (15), 1917

The Central Committee considers that the present meeting is of historic importance and that it is therefore necessary to record the two positions which have been revealed here.

1. The Central Committee considers that the opposition formed within the Central Committee has departed completely from all the fundamental positions of Bolshevism and of the proletarian class struggle in general by reiterating the utterly un-Marxist talk of the impossibility of a socialist revolution in Russia and of the necessity of yielding to the ultimatums and threats of resignation on the part of the obvious minority in the Soviet organisation, thus thwarting the will and the decision of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets and sabotaging the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry which has been inaugurated.

2. The Central Committee lays the whole responsibility for hindering revolutionary work and for the vacillations, so criminal at the present moment, on this opposition, and invites them to transfer their discussion and their scepticism to the press and to withdraw from the practical work they do not believe in. For this opposition reflects nothing but intimidation by the bourgeoisie and the sentiments of the exhausted (not the revolutionary) section of the population.

3. The Central Committee affirms that the purely Bolshevik government cannot be renounced without betraying the slogan of Soviet power, since the majority at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, without excluding anybody from the Congress, entrusted power, to this government.

4. The Central Committee affirms that, without betraying the slogan of the power of the Soviets of Workers',

Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, there can be no entering into petty bargaining over the affiliation to the Soviets of organisations of a non-Soviet type, i.e., organisations which are not voluntary associations of the revolutionary vanguard of the people who are fighting for the overthrow of the landowners and capitalists.

5. The Central Committee affirms that to yield to the ultimatums and threats of the minority of the Soviets would be tantamount to complete renunciation not only of Soviet power but of democracy, for such yielding would be tantamount to the majority's fear to make use of its majority, it would be tantamount to submitting to anarchy and inviting the repetition of ultimatums on the part of any minority.

6. The Central Committee affirms that, not having excluded anybody from the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, it is even now fully prepared to permit the return of those who walked out and to agree to a coalition within the Soviets with those who walked out, and that, consequently, all talk about the Bolsheviks refusing to share power with anybody is absolutely false.

7. The Central Committee affirms that on the day the present government was formed, a few hours before its formation, the Central Committee invited three representatives of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to attend its meeting and formally proposed that they should join the government. The refusal of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, although it was provisional and conditional, places on these Left Socialist-Revolutionaries the entire responsibility for the fact that an agreement with them was not reached.

8. The Central Committee recalls that a resolution, proposed by the Bolshevik group, was adopted by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets expressing readiness to reinforce the Soviet both by soldiers from the trenches and by peasants from the localities, from the villages, and that therefore the assertion that the Bolshevik government is opposed to a coalition with the peasants is absolutely false. On the contrary, the Central Committee declares that the land law of our government, which was wholly copied from the Socialist-Revolutionary Mandate, is practical proof of the complete and most sincere readiness of the Bolsheviks

to effect a coalition with the vast majority of Russia's population.

9. The Central Committee affirms, finally, that despite all difficulties, the victory of socialism both in Russia and in Europe can only be ensured by the unswerving continuation of the present government's policy. The Central Committee expresses its firm belief in the victory of this socialist revolution and calls upon all sceptics and waverers to abandon their waverings and whole-heartedly and with supreme energy support the actions of this government.

Lenin

Published, without the first three points, on November 17 (4), 1917 in Pravda No. 180

First published in full in 1932 in the second and third editions of Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. XXX

Published according to the manuscript

ULTIMATUM FROM THE MAJORITY ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) TO THE MINORITY

The majority on the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks), fully approving the policy so far pursued by the Council of People's Commissars, considers it necessary to address the following categorical statement to the minority on the Central Committee.

Our Party's policy at the present moment is defined in the resolution submitted by Comrade Lenin and adopted yesterday, November 2, by the Central Committee.* This resolution declares that every attempt to induce our Party to decline power is treason to the proletariat's cause, since the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, in the name of the millions of workers, soldiers and peasants, has entrusted this power to the representatives of our Party on the basis of our programme. This fundamental line of our tactics, which follows logically from our whole struggle against the conciliators and which guided us in the uprising against Kerensky's government, at present constitutes the revolutionary essence of Bolshevism and is once again endorsed by the Central Committee. This line is absolutely binding on all members of the Party, and first and foremost, on the Central Committee minority.

Yet members of the minority, both before and after yesterday's meeting of the Central Committee, have been pursuing a policy which obviously runs counter to our Party's fundamental line and which is demoralising our own ranks by causing hesitation at a moment when the greatest firmness and steadfastness are essential.

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* See pp. 277-79 of this volume.—*Ed.*

Thus, at yesterday's meeting of the Central Executive Committee, the Bolshevik group, with the direct participation of the Central Committee's minority members, openly voted against a decision of the Central Committee (on the number and persons of the representatives of our Party in the government). This unparalleled violation of discipline, committed by Central Committee member's behind the back of the Central Committee after many hours' discussions on the Central Committee, discussions provoked by these same members of the opposition, makes it obvious to us that the opposition intend to force the hand of Party institutions by sabotaging the Party's work at a moment when the fate of the Party, the fate of the revolution, depends upon the immediate result of this work.

We cannot and do not wish to bear responsibility for such a state of affairs.

Addressing the present statement to the minority of the Central Committee, we categorically demand a written reply to the question: Does the minority undertake to submit to Party discipline and to carry out the policy formulated in Comrade Lenin's resolution which was adopted by the Central Committee?

In the event of a negative or indefinite reply to this question we shall immediately place before the Petrograd Committee, the Moscow Committee, the Bolshevik group on the Central Executive Committee, the Petrograd City Conference and the Extraordinary Party Congress, the following alternative proposal:

Either the Party must entrust the present opposition with the task of forming a new government in conjunction with those of its allies on whose behalf the opposition is at present sabotaging our work—in which case we shall consider ourselves absolutely free in relation to this new government, which can contribute nothing but wavering, impotence and chaos.

Or—which we do not doubt—the Party will endorse the only possible revolutionary line, as expressed in yesterday's decision of the Central Committee—in which case the Party must categorically demand that the members of the opposition conduct their disorganising work outside our Party organisation. There is not and cannot be any other solution.

It stands to reason, a split would be highly deplorable. But an honest and open split would now be incomparably better than internal sabotage, the thwarting of our own decisions, disorganisation and prostration. At any rate, we do not doubt for a moment that the submission of our differences (which are in the main a replica of our differences with the *Novaya Zhizn* and Martov groups) to the people's judgement will ensure our policy the unreserved and devoted support of the revolutionary workers, soldiers and peasants, and will very soon condemn the wavering opposition to impotent isolation.

Written on November 3 (16), 1917

First published in 1922 in *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 7

Published according to a typewritten copy

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS[113]

For the bourgeoisie, freedom of the press meant freedom for the rich to publish and for the capitalists to control the newspapers, a practice which in all countries, including even the freest, produced a corrupt press.

For the workers' and peasants' government, freedom of the press means liberation of the press from capitalist oppression, and public ownership of paper mills and printing presses; equal right for public groups of a certain size (say, numbering 10,000) to a fair share of newsprint stocks and a corresponding quantity of printers' labour.

As a first step towards this goal, which is bound up with the working people's liberation from capitalist oppression, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government has appointed a Commission of Inquiry to look into the ties between capital and periodicals, the sources of their funds and revenues, the list of their donors, covers for their deficits, and every other aspect of the newspaper business in general. Concealment of books, accounts or any other documents from the Commission of Inquiry, or the giving of any evidence known to be false shall be punishable by a revolutionary court.

All newspaper owners, shareholders, and all members of their staffs shall be under the obligation to immediately submit written reports and information on the said questions to the *Commission of Inquiry*, probing the ties between capital and the press, and its dependence on capital, at Smolny Institute, Petrograd.

The following are appointed to serve on the Commission of Inquiry:*

The Commission shall have the power to co-opt members, call experts, subpoena witnesses, order the presentation of all accounts, etc.

Written on November 4 (17), 1917

First published on November 7, 1932 in *Pravda* No. 303

Published according to the manuscript

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* Follows space for list of names.—*Ed.*

MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 4 (17), 1917

1
SPEECH ON THE PRESS

Comrade Karelin assured us that the way he was taking led to socialism, but I am afraid this would be marching to socialism backwards. Trotsky was right: the officer cadets staged their uprising, and war was declared in Petrograd and Moscow for freedom of the press. This time the Socialist-Revolutionaries did not act at all like socialists or revolutionaries. This week all the telegraph offices were in Kerensky's hands. The Vikzhel was on their side. But they had no troops. It turned out that the army was on our side. The civil war was started by a handful of men. It is not over. Kaledin's troops are approaching Moscow, and the shock troops are approaching Petrograd. We do not want a civil war. Our troops have shown great restraint. They held their fire, and it all began when three of our men were killed. Krasnov was given soft treatment. He was only placed under house arrest. We are against civil war. But if it nevertheless goes on what are we to do? Trotsky was right in asking in whose behalf you spoke? We asked Krasnov whether he could sign on behalf of Kaledin that the latter would not continue the war. He naturally replied that he could not. How can we stop retaliative measures against an enemy who has not stopped his hostile operations?

We shall negotiate when peace terms are offered to us. But so far peace is being offered to us by those on whom it does not depend. These are only fine words. After all, *Rech* is an organ of the Kaledinites. We can well allow that

the Socialist-Revolutionaries are sincere, but it is, after all, a fact that Kaledin and Milyukov are behind them.

The firmer your stand, soldiers and workers, the more we shall gain. Otherwise they will say to us: "If they've let out Milyukov, they can't be strong." Earlier on we said that if we took power, we intended to close down the bourgeois newspapers. To tolerate the existence of these papers is to cease being a socialist. Those who say: "Open the bourgeois newspapers", fail to understand that we are moving at full speed to socialism. After all, tsarist newspapers were closed down after the overthrow of tsarism. Now we have thrown off the bourgeois yoke. We did not invent the social revolution: it was proclaimed by the Congress of the Soviets—no one protested, all adopted the decree proclaiming it. The bourgeoisie proclaimed liberty, equality and fraternity. The workers say: "We want something else." We are told that we are retreating. No, comrades, it is the Socialist-Revolutionaries who are returning to Kerensky. We are told that there are new elements in our resolution. Of course there are, because we are advancing to socialism. When the Socialist-Revolutionaries made speeches in the First and the Second Duma, they were also ridiculed for saying something new.

There should be a monopoly of private advertisements. The members of the printers' union look at them from the point of view of income. They will get it, but in another form. We cannot provide the bourgeoisie with an opportunity for slandering us. We must appoint a commission right away to probe the ties between the banks and the bourgeois newspapers. What kind of freedom do these newspapers want? Isn't it freedom to buy rolls of newsprint and hire crowds of penpushers? We must escape from the freedom of a press dependent on capital. This is a matter of principle. If we are to advance to socialism we cannot allow Kaledin's bombs to be reinforced by the bombs of falsehood.

Of course, our draft law is not perfect. But it will be applied everywhere by the Soviets in accordance with their local conditions. We are not bureaucrats and do not want to insist on the letter of the law everywhere, as was the practice in the old government offices. I recall the Socialist-Revolutionaries saying that people in the countryside knew

so very little. They were getting their information from *Russkoye Slovo*. We should blame ourselves for leaving the newspapers in the hands of the bourgeoisie. We must go forward, to a new society, and take the same attitude to the bourgeois newspapers as we did to the ultra-reactionary papers in February and March.

2
REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE LEFT SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES

The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' question was answered by Lenin.[114] He recalled that in the first days of the revolution the Bolsheviks invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to join the new government, but the group of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who refused to share responsibility in those difficult, critical days with their neighbours on the Left, declined to collaborate with the Bolsheviks.

In its activity the new regime could not afford to reckon with all the obstacles which could arise in its way if it scrupulously observed all formalities. The situation was much too grave and allowed of no procrastination. There was no time to waste on smoothing off rough corners that merely changed outward appearances without altering the essence of the new measures. After all, the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets itself, brushing aside all difficulties of a formal nature, adopted two laws of world importance at one long sitting. These laws may have formal defects from the standpoint of bourgeois society, but power is, after all, in the hands of the Soviets, which can always make the necessary amendments. The Kerensky government's criminal failure to act brought the country and the revolution to the brink of disaster: delay may indeed prove to be fatal, and the new regime is setting up milestones in the development of new forms of life by issuing laws to meet the aspirations and hopes of the broad masses. The local Soviets, depending on time and place, can amend, enlarge and add to the basic provisions worked out by the government. Creative activity at the grass roots is the basic factor

of the new public life. Let the workers set up workers' control at their factories. Let them supply the villages with manufactures in exchange for grain. Account must be taken of every single article, every pound of grain, because what socialism implies above all is keeping account of everything. Socialism cannot be decreed from above. Its spirit rejects the mechanical bureaucratic approach; living, creative socialism is the product of the masses themselves.

3
SPEECHES CONCERNING THE LEFT SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES' QUESTION

I

Lenin examines the concrete charges made against the Council of People's Commissars. It first learned of Muravyov's order[115] from the press, because the Commander-in-Chief had the power to issue emergency orders on his own authority. In view of the fact that the order did not contain anything clashing with the spirit of the new power, but was so worded that it could lead to undesirable misunderstandings, the Central Executive Committee has rescinded it. Furthermore, you criticise the Decree on Land. But it meets the demands of the people. You accuse us of schematising, but where are your own drafts, amendments and resolutions? Where are the fruits of your legislative activity? You were free to produce them. But we see nothing of them. You say we are extremists, but who are you? You are apologists for the sort of parliamentary obstruction that used to be known as scandal-mongering. If you are dissatisfied, why don't you call another congress and act, but don't talk about the collapse of power. Power is in the hands of our Party, which enjoys the confidence of the broad masses. Some of our comrades may have adopted a platform which has nothing in common with Bolshevism. But the mass of Moscow workers will not follow Rykov and Nogin. Comrade Proshyan said that in Finland, where the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were in touch with the mass, they believed there was need for the closest collaboration within the entire Left wing of revolutionary socialism. The fact that

the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries are not with us here merely shows that they have gone the way of their predecessors, the defencists. They have lost the common touch.

II

Lenin and Trotsky, referring to the example of the Party congresses and the need for them to submit to Party discipline, announce that they will take part in the voting.

4
SPEECH AND RESOLUTION ON THE RESIGNATION OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS FROM THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

Comrade Lenin replies to the preceding speakers. He says no internationalist can use the expression: "The West is disgracefully silent."[116] Only the blind fail to see the ferment among the working masses in Germany and the West. The top sections of the German proletariat and the socialist intelligentsia there, as everywhere else, are mostly defencists. But the lower strata of the proletariat are prepared to respond to our call in defiance of the will of their leaders. The fierce discipline of the German army and navy failed to prevent action by the opposition elements. The revolutionary sailors of the German navy, fully aware that their attempt was doomed, boldly went to their death in order to waken the spirit of revolt still dormant among the people. The Spartacus group[117] is intensifying its revolutionary propaganda. The name of Liebknecht, a tireless fighter for proletarian ideals, is daily gaining in popularity in Germany.

We believe in the revolution in the West. We know that it is inevitable, but it cannot, of course, be made to order. Did we know last December what exactly would happen in the coming February? Did we, in September, know with any certitude at all that within a month the revolutionary democrats of Russia would carry out the world's greatest revolution? We were aware that the old power was on top of a volcano. Many signs told us of the great work going on deep down in people's minds. We felt that the air was charged with electricity. We were sure that it would inevitably explode in a purifying thunderstorm. But we

could not predict the day and hour. We now see the same picture in Germany. There, too, there is a swelling undercurrent of dissatisfaction which will inevitably take the forms of a popular movement. We cannot decree a revolution, but we can help it along. We shall conduct organised fraternisation in the trenches and help the peoples of the West to start an invincible socialist revolution. Comrade Zaks further spoke about decreeing socialism. But doesn't the present government urge the masses to create better forms of life themselves? You have the beginnings of socialism in the exchange of manufactured goods for grain, and the strict control and accounting of production. We are sure we are going to have a republic of labour. He who will not work, will have to go without food.

But to continue: what is the sign of our Party's isolation? It is the breakaway of a few intellectuals. But we daily find more and more support among the peasants. Victory will belong only to those who have faith in the people, those who are immersed in the life-giving spring of popular creativity.

Comrade Lenin then proposes to the Central Executive Committee the following resolution:

The Central Executive Committee authorises the Council of People's Commissars to nominate, by the next sitting, candidates for the People's Commissars of the Interior, and Trade and Industry, and invites Comrade Kolegayev to fill the post of People's Commissar of Agriculture.

Izvestia No. 218,
November 7, 1917

Published according to the *Izvestia* text; Resolution on the resignation, according to the text of *Minutes of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies, Second Convocation*, Moscow, 1918

SPEECH AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES AND DELEGATES FROM THE FRONTS NOVEMBER 4 (17), 1917

NEWSPAPER REPORT

I am unable to make a long speech; I can merely outline the new government's position, programme and tasks.

You are aware that there was a unanimous demand for a policy of peace, for an immediate offer of peace. There is not a single bourgeois minister in the whole of Europe, including this country, who has not promised peace; the soldiers of Russia have found these speeches to be false; they were promised a policy of peace, but no peace was offered and instead they were driven into an offensive. We believed it to be our government's first duty to offer an immediate peace, and this has been done.

Comrade Lenin sets forth the terms on which the new government has proposed peace, and adds: If the powers keep their colonies, there will never be an end to this war. What is the way out? There is only one: it is for the workers' and peasants' revolution to defeat capital. We never promised that the war could be ended at one stroke, by driving bayonets into ground. War springs from the clash of fortunes running to thousands of millions, which have divided up the world, and if the war is to be brought to an end, the power of capital must be destroyed.

Comrade Lenin speaks on the transfer of power to the Soviets, and declares that we have witnessed a new phenomenon: the peasants refuse to believe that all power belongs to the Soviets, they are still expecting something else from the government and forget that the Soviet is not a private but a state institution. We declare that we want a new state, that the Soviet must replace the old officialdom, and that all the people must learn to govern. You should stand

up to your full stature and straighten your backs, and then you need have no fear of threats. The officer cadets tried to engineer an uprising but we were able to deal with them; they organised a bloodbath in Moscow and shot soldiers on the Kremlin wall. But when the people won out, they let the enemy keep not only their military honour but also their arms.

The Vikzhel has threatened a strike, but we shall turn to the masses and ask them whether they want to go on strike and starve the soldiers at the front and the people in the rear, and I am sure that the railway proletariat won't have it. We are accused of making arrests. Indeed, we have made arrests; today we arrested the director of the State Bank. We are accused of resorting to terrorism, but we have not resorted, and I hope will not resort, to the terrorism of the French revolutionaries who guillotined unarmed men. I hope we shall not resort to it, because we have strength on our side. When we arrested anyone we told him we would let him go if he gave us a written promise not to engage in sabotage. Such written promises have been given. Our fault is that the Soviet organisation has not yet learned to govern, and that there are far too many meetings. Let the Soviets form teams and get down to the business of government. Our task is to advance to socialism. A few days ago the workers received the law on the control of production[118] which makes the factory committee a state institution. The workers must implement this law immediately. They will supply the peasants with cloth and iron, and the peasants will give them grain. I just saw a comrade from Ivanovo-Voznesensk, and he told me this was the main thing. Socialism means keeping account of everything. You will have socialism if you take stock of every piece of iron and cloth. We need engineers for production, and we value their labour highly. We shall be glad to pay them. We do not intend, at the moment, to deprive them of their privileged position. We value everyone who is willing to work but he must not behave as a boss but as an equal, under workers' control. We have no feeling of animosity for individuals, and we shall try to help them fit into the new pattern.

As for the peasants we say: help the working peasant, spare the middle peasant, compel the rich peasant to pay. After the October 25 Revolution we were threatened with

destruction. Some were scared and wanted to escape power, but we were not destroyed. This was because our enemies could find support only from the officer cadets, whereas we had the people on our side. But for the massive drive by the soldiers and workers, power would never have dropped from the hands that held it. Power passed to the Soviets, which are organisations giving the people full freedom. We, the Soviet Government, have received our powers from the Congress of Soviets and, confident of your support, we shall continue to act as we have acted. We have not excluded anyone. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries have gone, but that is a crime on their part. We invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to take part in the government, but they refused. We do not want any bargaining over power, we don't want any bids or counterbids. We shall keep the City Council away from power because it is a Kornilovite centre. Some say we are isolated. The bourgeoisie has surrounded us with an atmosphere of lies and slander, but I have yet to see the soldier who is not enthusiastic over the Soviets having taken power. I have yet to see the peasant who opposes the Soviets. There must be an alliance of the poor peasants and the workers, and socialism will triumph the world over. (*Members of the Soviet rise, and give Lenin a stormy ovation as he leaves.*)

Pravda No. 181,
November 18 (5), 1917

Published according
to the *Pravda* text

TO THE POPULATION

Comrades—workers, soldiers, peasants and all working people!

The workers' and peasants' revolution has definitely triumphed in Petrograd, having dispersed or arrested the last remnants of the small number of Cossacks deceived by Kerensky. The revolution has triumphed in Moscow too. Even before the arrival of a number of troop trains dispatched from Petrograd, the officer cadets and other Kornilovites in Moscow signed peace terms—the disarming of the cadets and the dissolution of the Committee of Salvation.[119]

Daily and hourly reports are coming in from the front and from the villages announcing the support of the overwhelming majority of the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the uyezds for the new government and its decrees on peace and the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants. The victory of the workers' and peasants' revolution is assured because the majority of the people have already sided with it.

It is perfectly understandable that the landowners and capitalists, and the *top groups* of office employees and civil servants closely linked with the bourgeoisie, in a word, all the wealthy and those supporting them, react to the new revolution with hostility, resist its victory, threaten to close the banks, disrupt or bring to a standstill the work of the different establishments, and hamper the revolution in every way, openly or covertly. Every politically-conscious worker was well aware that we would inevitably encounter resistance of this kind. The entire Party press of

the Bolsheviks has written about this on numerous occasions. Not for a single minute will the working classes be intimidated by this resistance; they will not falter in any way before the threats and strikes of the supporters of the bourgeoisie.

The majority of the people are with us. The majority of the working and oppressed people all over the world are with us. Ours is the cause of justice. Our victory is assured.

The resistance of the capitalists and the high-ranking employees will be smashed. Not a single person will be deprived of his property except under the special state law proclaiming nationalisation of the banks and syndicates. This law is being drafted. Not one of the working people will suffer the loss of a kopek; on the contrary, he will be helped. Apart from the strictest accounting and control, apart from levying the set taxes in full the government has no intention of introducing any other measure.

In support of these just demands the vast majority of the people have rallied round the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government.

Comrades, working people! Remember that now *you yourselves* are at the helm of state. No one will help you if you yourselves do not unite and take into *your* hands *all affairs* of the state. *Your* Soviets are from now on the organs of state authority, legislative bodies with full powers.

Rally around your Soviets. Strengthen them. Get on with the job yourselves; begin right at the bottom, do not wait for anyone. Establish the strictest revolutionary law and order, mercilessly suppress any attempts to create anarchy by drunkards, hooligans, counter-revolutionary officer cadets, Kornilovites and their like.

Ensure the strictest control over production and accounting of products. Arrest and hand over to the revolutionary courts all who dare to injure the people's cause, irrespective of whether the injury is manifested in sabotaging production (damage, delay and subversion), or in hoarding grain and products or holding up shipments of grain, disorganising the railways and the postal, telegraph and telephone services, or any resistance whatever to the great cause of peace, the cause of transferring the land to the peasants, of ensuring workers' control over the production and distribution of products.

Comrades, workers, soldiers, peasants and all working people! Take *all* power into the hands of *your* Soviets. Be watchful and guard like the apple of your eye your land, grain, factories, equipment, products, transport—all that from now onwards will be *entirely* your property, public property. Gradually, with the consent and approval of the majority of the peasants, in keeping with their *practical* experience and that of the workers, we shall go forward firmly and unswervingly to the victory of socialism—a victory that will be sealed by the advanced workers of the most civilised countries, bring the peoples lasting peace and liberate them from all oppression and exploitation.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

November 5, 1917,
Petrograd.

Pravda No. 4,
(evening edition)
November 19 (6), 1917

Published according
to the manuscript

REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM PEASANTS[120]

In reply to numerous questions from peasants, be it known that all power in the country henceforth belongs wholly to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The workers' revolution has won in Petrograd and Moscow and is winning everywhere else in Russia. The Workers' and Peasants' Government ensures the alliance of the mass of the peasants, the poor peasants, the majority of the peasants, with the workers against the landowners, against the capitalists.

Hence the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, primarily the uyezd and then the gubernia Soviets, are from now on, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, vested with full governmental authority in their localities. Landed proprietorship has been *abolished* by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. A decree on land has already been issued by the present Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government. In conformity with this decree all landed estates pass over wholly to the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

The volost land committees must at once take over the administration of all landed estates, instituting the strictest accounting, maintaining- perfect order and safeguarding with utmost strictness the former property of the landowners, which henceforth is the property of the whole people and which the people themselves must therefore protect.

All rulings of the volost land committees issued with the approval of the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies have the force of *law* and must be carried out unconditionally and without delay.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government appointed by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets has been named the Council of People's Commissars.

The Council of People's Commissars calls upon the peasants to take all power into their own hands in their respective localities. The workers give their full, undivided, all-round support to the peasants, are getting the production of machines and implements started, and ask the peasants to help by delivering grain.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

November 5, 1917,
Petrograd.

Izvestia No. 219,
November 8, 1917

Published according
to the manuscript

FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

To Comrades Kamenev, Zinoviev, Ryazanov and Larin

Once before, the Central Committee delivered an ultimatum to the leading exponents of your policy (Kamenev and Zinoviev), demanding complete subordination to the Central Committee's line and decisions, and renunciation of efforts to sabotage its work and of all subversive activity.*

By leaving the Central Committee, but remaining in the Party, the exponents of your policy undertook to abide by Central Committee decisions. Actually, however, you have not confined yourselves to criticism within the Party, but have brought confusion into the ranks of the fighters in an uprising which is still going on, and continue, in violation of Party discipline, to frustrate Central Committee decisions and hamper its work outside the Party, in the Soviets, the municipal bodies, the trade unions, etc.

In view of this, the Central Committee is forced to restate its ultimatum and to request that you immediately pledge yourselves in writing either to abide by Central Committee decisions and to conduct its policy in all your statements, or to withdraw from all Party activity in public and resign from all responsible posts in the working-class movement until the next Party congress.

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* See pp. 280-82 of this volume.—*Ed.*

Refusal to pledge yourselves to either course will make it imperative for the Central Committee to consider the question of your immediate expulsion from the Party.

Written on November 5 or 6 (18 or 19), 1917

First published in 1927, in the pamphlet *The Party's Fight Against Zinoviev's and Kamenev's Strike-breaking Tactics in October 1917*

Published according to the manuscript

FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS AND TO ALL THE WORKING CLASSES OF RUSSIA

Comrades,

It is a matter of common knowledge that the majority at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies were delegates belonging to the Bolshevik Party.

This fact is fundamental for a proper understanding of the victorious revolution that has just taken place in Petrograd, Moscow and the whole of Russia. Yet that fact is constantly forgotten and ignored by all the supporters of the capitalists and their unwitting aides, who are undermining the fundamental principle of the new revolution, namely, *all power to the Soviets*. There must be no government in Russia other than the *Soviet Government*. Soviet power has been won in Russia, and the transfer of government from one Soviet party to another is guaranteed without any revolution, simply by a decision of the Soviets; simply by new elections of deputies to the Soviets. The majority at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets belonged to the Bolshevik Party. Therefore the only Soviet Government is the one formed by that Party. And everybody knows that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, several hours prior to the formation of the new government, and to the presentation of the list of its members to the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, summoned to its session three of the most prominent members of the group of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, Comrades Kamkov, Spiro and Karelin, and *invited them* to join the new government. We very much regret that the Left Socialist-Revolutionary

comrades refused; we regard their refusal as impermissible on the part of revolutionaries and champions of the working people. We are ready at any moment to include Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the government, but we declare that, as the majority party at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, we are entitled to form the government, *and it is our duty* to the people to do so.

Everybody knows that the Central Committee of our Party submitted a purely Bolshevik list of People's Commissars to the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and that *the Congress approved this list of a purely Bolshevik government.*

The statements to the effect that the Bolshevik government is *not* a Soviet Government are therefore pure lies, and come, and can come, only from the enemies of the people, from the enemies of Soviet power. On the contrary, now, after the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and until the Third Congress meets, or until new elections to the Soviets are held, or until a new government is formed by the Central Executive Committee, *only* a Bolshevik government can be regarded as the *Soviet* Government.

* * *

Comrades, yesterday, November 4, several members of the Central Committee of our Party and of the Council of People's Commissars—Kamenev, Zinoviev, Nogin, Rykov, Milyutin and a few others—resigned from the Central Committee of our Party, and the three last named from the Council of People's Commissars. In a large party like ours, notwithstanding the proletarian and revolutionary line of our policy, it was inevitable that individual comrades should have proved to be insufficiently staunch and firm in the struggle against the enemies of the people. The tasks that now face our Party are really immense, the difficulties are enormous, and several members of our Party who formerly held posts of responsibility have flinched in face of the onslaught of the bourgeoisie and fled from our ranks. The bourgeoisie and all its helpers are jubilant over this fact and are maliciously rejoicing, clamouring about disintegration and predicting the fall of the Bolshevik government.

Comrades, do not believe these lies. The comrades who have resigned have acted as deserters, since they not only quitted the posts entrusted to them, but violated the direct decision of the Central Committee of our Party binding them to delay their resignation at least until a decision was taken by the Petrograd and Moscow Party organisations. We strongly condemn this desertion. We are profoundly convinced that all class-conscious workers, soldiers and peasants who belong to or sympathise with our Party will condemn the actions of the deserters with equal severity.

But we declare that the desertion of a few individuals belonging to the leading group of our Party cannot for a moment or in the slightest way shake the unity of the masses who follow our Party and that it therefore will not shake our Party.

You must recall, comrades, that two of the deserters, Kamenev and Zinoviev, acted as deserters and blacklegs even before the Petrograd uprising; for they not only voted against the uprising at the decisive meeting of the Central Committee on October 10, 1917, but, even *after* the decision had been taken by the Central Committee, agitated among the Party workers against the uprising. It is common knowledge that newspapers which fear to take the side of the workers and are more inclined to side with the bourgeoisie (e.g., *Novaya Zhizn*), raised at that time, in common with the whole bourgeois press, a hue and cry about the "disintegration" of our Party, about "the collapse of the uprising" and so on. Events, however, swiftly refuted the lies and slanders of some and the doubts, waverings and cowardice of others: The "storm" they tried to raise over the efforts of Kamenev and Zinoviev to thwart the Petrograd uprising proved to be *a storm in a teacup*, while the great enthusiasm of the people, the great heroism of millions of workers, soldiers, and peasants in Petrograd, in Moscow, at the front, in the trenches and in the villages, pushed the deserters out of the way as easily as a railway train pushes aside splinters of wood.

Shame on all the faint-hearted, all the waverers and doubters, on all those who allowed themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie or who have succumbed to the outcries of their direct and indirect supporters! *There*

is not the slightest hesitation among the *mass* of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd, Moscow and other places. Our Party stands solidly and firmly, as one man, in defence of Soviet power, in defence of the interests of all the working people, and first and foremost of the workers and poor peasants.

Bourgeois hacks and those who allowed themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie accuse us in chorus of being uncompromising, of being irreconcilable, of refusing to share power with another party. That is not true, comrades. *We have invited* and continue to invite the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to share power with us. It is not our fault that *they have refused*. We began the negotiations, and, after the delegates of the Second Congress of Soviets had dispersed, we made all kinds of concessions in the course of these negotiations, even to the point of provisionally agreeing to admit representatives of a section of the Petrograd City Council, that nest of Kornilov men, which will be the first to be swept away by the people should the Kornilovite scoundrels, should the darling sons of the capitalists and landowners, the officer cadets, attempt once more to resist the will of the people as they did last Sunday in Petrograd and as they would like to do again (as is proved by the exposure of the conspiracy of Purishkevich and the documents seized on him yesterday, November 3). But the gentlemen who stand behind the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and act through them in the interests of the bourgeoisie interpreted our readiness to make concessions as weakness, and took advantage of this readiness to present us with new ultimatums. At the conference on November 3, Mr. Abramovich and Mr. Martov appeared and presented an ultimatum: no negotiations until our government puts a stop to the arrests and to the suppression of bourgeois newspapers.

Both our Party and the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets *refused* to accept this ultimatum, which obviously emanated from the supporters of Kaledin, the bourgeoisie, Kerensky and Kornilov. The conspiracy of Purishkevich and the appearance in Petrograd on November 5 of a delegation from a unit of the 17th Army Corps threatening us with a march on Petrograd (a ridiculous threat, for the advanced detachments of these Kornilovites have

already been beaten and have fled at Gatchina, while most of them have refused to fight against the Soviets)—all these events have proved who were the *real* authors of the ultimatum of Mr. Abramovich and Mr. Martov and whom these people *really* served.

Let the working people, therefore, remain calm and firm! Our Party will never yield to the ultimatums of the minority in the Soviets, the minority who have allowed themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie and, despite their "good intentions" virtually act as puppets in the hands of the Kornilov gang.

We stand firmly by the principle of Soviet power, i.e., the power of the *majority* obtained at the last Congress of Soviets. We agreed, and *still agree*, to share power with the minority in the Soviets, provided that minority loyally and honestly undertake to submit to the majority and carry out the programme, *approved by the whole* Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, for gradual, but firm and undeviating steps towards socialism. But we shall not submit to any ultimatums of groups of intellectuals who are not backed by the people, and who *in actual fact* are backed only by the Kornilovites, the Savinkov men, the officer cadets, etc.

Let the working people, therefore, remain calm and firm! Our Party, the party of the Soviet majority, stands solid and united in defence of their interests and, as before, behind our Party stand the millions of the workers in the cities, the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the villages, prepared at all costs to achieve the victory of peace and the victory of socialism!

Written on November 5-6 (18-19), 1917

Published in *Pravda* No. 182, November 20 (7), 1917

Published according to the newspaper text

DIRECT-LINE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND FIELD H.Q. NOVEMBER 9 (22), 1917[121]

Is that the Commander-in-Chief?

Dieterichs here.

We should like to speak to the Acting Commander-in-Chief. If General Dukhonin is no longer charged with these duties, please let us have the person now acting in his stead. As far as we are aware, General Dukhonin has not yet resigned.

Field H. Q. replying: Acting C.-in-C. General Dukhonin waited for your call until 1 a.m. and is now asleep. The telegraph was out of order, and later was used by Field H. Q. to communicate with G.H.Q.

Could you tell us whether you have received a wireless message from the Council of People's Commissars sent at 4.00 o'clock, and what has been done to carry out the instructions of the Council of People's Commissars?

Field H. Q. replying: An undated and unnumbered message of state importance was received, and that is why General Dukhonin requested General Manikovsky for the necessary guarantees confirming its authenticity.

What was Manikovsky's reply, at what time was the query sent, and was it radioed, telephoned or telegraphed?

Field H. Q. replying: No answer has been received yet, and a request was sent an hour ago to speed up the reply.

Please specify the time and means used in sending the first query. Will you hurry up, please?

Field H. Q. replying: The message was telegraphed and radioed to General Manikovsky—the time, just a minute....
The message was sent at 19.50.

Why wasn't a copy of the query sent to me, the People's Commissar for War[122]? From a personal conversation with me the C.-in-C. was aware that General Manikovsky's sole responsibility is continuity of technical operations in logistics and food supplies, and that I have been entrusted with the political direction of and responsibility for the War Ministry's activity.

Field H. Q. replying: I can say nothing at all about this.

We declare most emphatically that we place all the responsibility for the delay in this crucial state matter upon General Dukhonin and unconditionally demand: first, the immediate dispatch of truce envoys, and second, General Dukhonin's personal presence on the line at 11 a.m. sharp tomorrow. Should the delay result in famine, disorganisation or defeat, or anarchic revolts, the full blame will fall upon you, and the soldiers will be duly informed of it.

Field H. Q. replying: I shall inform General Dukhonin of this.

When? Right away? We are waiting for Dukhonin.

Field H. Q. replying: I shall wake him up at once.
This is Acting C.-in-C. General Dukhonin.

The People's Commissars here; what's your answer?

I see from the tape I just got of your conversation with G.H.Q. that your message to me was sent before any decision was taken on the substance of the message signed by the People's Commissars Ulyanov-Lenin, Trotsky and Krylenko; in view of this I must have the following factual information: (1) Has the Council of People's Commissars received any reply to its message to the belligerent powers containing the Decree on Peace; (2) What was to be done with the Rumanian Army, which is a part of our front; (3) Was there any intention of engaging in talks about a separate armistice and with whom only with the Germans or with the Turks, or are we to negotiate a general armistice?

The text of the message sent to you is absolutely clear and to the point; it speaks of an immediate opening of armistice talks with all the belligerents, and we resolutely deny the right to delay this matter of state importance by any preliminary queries whatsoever; we insist that truce envoys

should be dispatched immediately and that we receive progress reports every hour.

Field H. Q. replying: My questions are of a purely technical character and unless they are answered it will be impossible to negotiate.

You must be aware that many technical, rather detailed questions will arise during the talks, and we shall answer them as they arise or are raised by the enemy; that is why we demand once again, in the form of an ultimatum, that formal armistice negotiations be started unconditionally and without delay with all the belligerent countries, both Allied and those hostile to us. Please state your reply in precise terms.

I can understand only one thing, and it is that you cannot negotiate directly with the powers. It is even less possible for me to do so on your behalf. Only a central government supported by the army and the nation can have enough prestige and importance for the enemy to lend these negotiations the authority necessary to achieve results. I also believe that an early conclusion of a general peace is in Russia's interests.

Do you flatly refuse to give us a precise reply and carry out our orders?

I have given you a precise reply as to the reasons why I find it impossible to put your message into effect, and I repeat that the peace Russia needs can be obtained only by a central government. Dukhonin.

In the name of the Government of the Russian Republic, on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars, we dismiss you from your post for refusing to obey government orders and for conduct that entails untold hardships for the working people of all countries and especially the armies. We order you, on pain of responsibility under war-time laws, to continue your duties pending the arrival at Field Headquarters of a new Commander-in-Chief or a person empowered by him to take over from you. Ensign Krylenko is appointed Commander-in-Chief.

Lenin, *Stalin*, *Krylenko*

Rabochy i Soldat No. 20,
November 9 (22), 1917

Published according
to the newspaper text

WIRELESS MESSAGE

TO ALL REGIMENTAL, DIVISIONAL, CORPS, ARMY AND OTHER COMMITTEES, TO ALL SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY AND SAILORS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY NAVY[123]

On the night of November 7 the Council of People's Commissars sent a wireless message to Commander-in-Chief Dukhonin ordering him immediately and formally to propose an armistice to all the belligerent countries, both Allied and those hostile to us.

This message was received at Field Headquarters on November 8 at 5.05 a.m. Dukhonin was ordered to keep the Council of People's Commissars constantly informed of the progress of the negotiations and to sign the armistice agreement only after it had been approved by the Council of People's Commissars. Simultaneously, a similar proposal to conclude an armistice was formally submitted to all the plenipotentiary representatives of the Allied countries in Petrograd.

Not having received a reply from Dukhonin by the evening of November 8, the Council of People's Commissars empowered Lenin, Stalin and Krylenko to ascertain the causes of the delay from Dukhonin over the direct line.

The conversation lasted from 2 a.m. to 4.30 a.m. on November 9. Dukhonin made numerous attempts to evade giving an explanation of his conduct and a precise reply to the orders of the government, but when Dukhonin was given a categorical order to enter immediately into formal negotiations for an armistice, he refused to obey. Thereupon, in the name of the Government of the Russian Republic, on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars, Dukhonin was informed that he was dismissed from his post for refusing to obey government orders and for conduct that entailed untold hardships for the working people of all countries and

especially for the armies. At the same time, Dukhonin was ordered to continue his duties pending the arrival of a new Commander-in-Chief or a person empowered by the latter to take over from Dukhonin. Ensign Krylenko has been appointed the new Commander-in-Chief.

Soldiers, the cause of peace is in your hands! Do not allow the counter-revolutionary generals to frustrate the great cause of peace, place them under guard in order to avert acts of summary justice unworthy of a revolutionary army and to prevent these generals from escaping the trial that awaits them. Maintain the strictest revolutionary and military order.

Let the regiments at the front immediately elect representatives to start formal negotiations for an armistice with the enemy.

The Council of People's Commissars authorises you to do this.

Do everything possible to keep us informed of every step in the negotiations. The Council of People's Commissars is alone authorised to sign the final armistice agreement.

Soldiers, the cause of peace is in your hands! Maintain vigilance, restraint and energy, and the cause of peace will triumph!

In the name of the Government of the Russian Republic

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

N. Krylenko,
People's Commissar for War and
Commander-in-Chief

Written on November 9 (22), 1917

Published in the newspaper
Rabochy i Soldat No. 20,
November 9 (22), 1917

Published according
to the newspaper text

FOREWORD TO THE PAMPHLET, *HOW THE SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES CHEATED THE PEOPLE, AND WHAT THE NEW BOLSHEVIK GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN THE PEOPLE*

The peasants of Russia are now faced with the prospect of taking their country's destiny into their own hands.

The victory of the workers' revolution in the two leading cities and in most of the rest of Russia has given the peasants the *possibility* of taking the land arrangements into *their own* hands. Not all peasants have as yet realised that *their* Soviets of Peasants' Deputies are the true, authentic, supreme *state* power, but they soon will.

When they do realise it, their alliance with the workers, the alliance of the bulk of the peasants—the poor, working peasants—will be consolidated. *This* alliance, both in the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly, and not the alliance of the peasants and the capitalists, is the only one really capable of ensuring the working people's interests.

It will surely very soon be brought home to the peasants that if they are to be rid of the horrors of war and the oppression of the landowners and capitalists, they must ally themselves with the working people of the towns, above all the factory workers, and *not* with the rich.

If the peasants are to see this soon, they must, among other things, make a closer and more amply documented comparison of the promises and draft laws of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the Decree on Land issued by the new, workers' and peasants' government.

Such a comparison is made in this pamphlet. It gives the *documents*, which is the first thing anyone needs if he is going to use his head. The main document relating to the Socialist-Revolutionaries is their Minister Maslov's draft land law. I take it in full from *Dyelo Naroda* (Cher-

nov's newspaper). I am also republishing in full my own article on the subject from *Rabochy Put*.*

The Decree on Land issued by the workers' and peasants' government is also given in full.**

Peasant comrades, seek the truth about the various parties, and you shall find it! Collect and compare the draft land laws proposed by the various parties.

You must read carefully the draft land law put forward by the Socialist-Revolutionary minister, and the Decree on Land issued by the present Bolshevik government, which received its powers from the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. We have no doubt at all as to what the peasants' final conclusion will be.

N. Lenin

November 9, 1917,
Petrograd.

Published in 1917
in a pamphlet issued
by *Selsky Vestnik*
(Rural Herald) in Petrograd

Published according
to the pamphlet text

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* See pp. 228-33 of this volume.—*Ed.*
** See pp. 258-60 of this volume.—*Ed.*

MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, NOVEMBER 10 (23), 1917

1
REPORT ON TALKS WITH DUKHONIN

The full text of our talks with Dukhonin has been printed, so I can confine myself to a few remarks. It was clear to us that we were dealing with an opponent of the people's will and an enemy of the revolution. Dukhonin resorted to all manner of shifts and dodges to delay matters. Doubt was expressed as to the authenticity of our message, and the query was not addressed to Krylenko but to General Manikovsky. Thus, the generals have stolen at least one full day in this important and vital matter of peace. General Dukhonin came to the apparatus only when we said we would refer the matter to the soldiers. We told Dukhonin of our demand that he should start armistice negotiations immediately, and nothing more. Dukhonin was not empowered to conclude an armistice. Not only was the conclusion of an armistice outside Dukhonin's competence, but his every step in the matter of the armistice negotiations was to have been under the control of the People's Commissars. The bourgeois press has accused us of offering a separate armistice and of ignoring the interests of the Rumanian Army. That is a lie. We propose that the peace talks should be started immediately, and an armistice concluded with all countries, without exception. We have information that our wireless messages have been reaching Europe. Thus, our message about the victory over Kerensky* was monitored and

* See p. 274 of this volume.—*Ed.*

relayed by the Austrian wireless telegraph. The Germans, on their part, tried to jam it. We can contact Paris by wireless, and when the peace treaty is drawn up, we shall be able to inform the French people that it can be signed, and that it is up to them to have the armistice concluded within two hours. Let's see what Clemenceau will have to say then. Our Party has never said that it could produce a peace all at once. It said that it would make an immediate offer of peace and would publish the secret treaties. That has been done—the fight for peace is on. It will be an uphill fight. International imperialism is mobilising all its forces against us, but despite its great strength our chances are quite good in the revolutionary struggle for peace, in which we shall combine revolutionary fraternisation with the struggle for peace. The bourgeoisie would very much like the imperialist governments to combine against us.

2
CONCLUDING SPEECH

Comrade Chudnovsky said here that he had "taken the liberty" of making some sharp criticisms of the Commissars' actions. There can be no question at all as to whether or not sharp criticism is to be allowed, for it is a revolutionary's duty to engage in such criticism, and the People's Commissars do not claim to be infallible.

Comrade Chudnovsky said we could not accept an indecent peace, but he failed to cite a single word or fact to show that this peace was unacceptable. We said: peace can be concluded only by the Council of People's Commissars. When we began our talks with Dukhonin we were aware that we were about to negotiate with an enemy, and we cannot procrastinate when dealing with an enemy. We could not foretell the outcome of the talks. But we were fully determined. We had to take a decision on the spot, without leaving the line. We had to act against an insubordinate general there and then. We could not get the Central Executive Committee together on the line; that was in no sense a violation of the Central Executive Committee's prerogatives. You don't wait for the outcome in a war, and it was a war we were fighting against the counter-revolutionary generals, so we turned to the soldiers. We removed Dukhonin but we are not formalists or bureaucrats, and we are well aware that it was not enough to remove him. He opposed us and we appealed over his head to the army masses. We authorised them to enter into armistice negotiations. But we did not conclude an armistice. The soldiers were warned to keep an eye on the counter-revolutionary generals.* I think any

* See pp. 312-13 of this volume.—*Ed.*

regiment is disciplined enough to maintain the necessary revolutionary order. In the event of betrayal during the soldiers' armistice negotiations or an attack during fraternisation, it is the soldiers' duty to shoot the traitors on the spot, without more ado.

It is monstrous to allege that we have now weakened our front in the event of the Germans starting an offensive. Until Dukhonin's exposure and removal, the army was never sure that it was conducting an international policy of peace. It now has this assurance: the only way to fight Dukhonin is to appeal to the sense of discipline and initiative of the masses of soldiers. Peace cannot be concluded only from above. Peace must be won from below. We put no trust in the German generals, but we have faith in the German people. A peace concluded by the commanders-in-chief, without the active participation of the soldiers, would be precarious. I do not object to Kamenev's proposal as a matter of principle but because it is inadequate and too weak. I have no objections to a commission but I suggest that we keep an open mind on its functions; I dislike half-measures and propose that we should be given a free hand in this respect.

Pravda No. 188,
November 26 (13), 1917

Published according to the text of *Minutes of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies, Second Convocation*, Moscow, 1918

FROM THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS TO THE REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY COMMITTEE

The disruption of the food supply caused by war and mismanagement is being aggravated to the extreme by profiteers, marauders and their accomplices on the railways, on steamship lines, in transport offices, etc.

At a time of great national hardship, criminal plunderers are jeopardising the health and lives of millions of soldiers and workers for their own gain.

Such a state of affairs cannot be tolerated for a single day longer.

The Council of People's Commissars orders the Revolutionary Military Committee to adopt the most vigorous measures to eradicate profiteering and sabotage, concealment of supplies, the malicious delay of freight, etc.

All persons guilty of such actions are liable, by special decision of the Revolutionary Military Committee, *to immediate arrest and custody in the prisons of Kronstadt*, pending their trial by revolutionary court martial.

All public organisations must be drawn into the fight against the food plunderers.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

Written not later than November 10 (23), 1917

Published on November 12 (25), 1917 in *Izvestia* No. 223

Published according to the newspaper text

THE EXTRAORDINARY ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES[124]

NOVEMBER 10-25 (NOVEMBER 23-DECEMBER 8), 1917

THE EXTRAORDINARY ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES[124]

NOVEMBER 10-25 (NOVEMBER 23-DECEMBER 8), 1917

1
STATEMENT TO THE BOLSHEVIK GROUP AT THE EXTRAORDINARY ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES[125]

We demand most emphatically that the Bolsheviks insist, in the form of an ultimatum, on an open *vote* on the question of issuing an *immediate* invitation to *several* representatives of the Government.

If the *reading* of this proposal and voting on it at the plenary session are refused, the whole Bolshevik group should *walk out* by way of protest.

Lenin

Written on November 12 (25), 1917

First published in 1933 in *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Published according to the manuscript

2
SPEECH ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION
NOVEMBER 14 (27)

NEWSPAPER REPORT

On the instructions of the Bolshevik group, Comrade Lenin delivered a speech setting forth the views of the Bolshevik Party on the agrarian question.

He said that the Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries had suffered defeat over the agrarian question, since it had advocated the confiscation of the landed estates, but refused to carry it into effect.

Landed proprietorship forms the basis of feudal oppression, and the confiscation of the landed estates is the first step of the revolution in Russia. But the land question cannot be settled independently of the other problems of the revolution. A correct view of these problems can be derived from an analysis of the stages through which the revolution has passed. The first stage was the overthrow of the autocracy and the establishment of the power of the bourgeoisie and the landowners. The interests of the landowners were closely interwoven with those of the bourgeoisie and the banks. The second stage was the consolidation of the Soviets and a policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The mistake of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries was that at that time they failed to oppose the policy of compromise on the plea that the masses were not sufficiently enlightened. A party is the vanguard of a class, and its duty is to lead the masses and not merely to reflect the average political level of the masses. But in order to lead those who vacillate the Left Socialist-Revolutionary comrades must themselves stop vacillating.

Comrades Left Socialist-Revolutionaries! In July there began a period in which the masses of the people started

breaking away from the policy of compromise, but to this very day the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries are stretching out a hand to the Avksentyevs, while offering the workers only their little finger. If compromise continues, the revolution is doomed. Only if the peasantry supports the workers can the problems of the revolution be solved. Compromise is an attempt on the part of the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers to get their needs satisfied by means of reforms, by concessions on the part of capital, without a socialist revolution. But it is impossible to give the people peace and land without overthrowing the bourgeoisie, without socialism. It is the duty of the revolution to put an end to compromise, and to put an end to compromise means taking the path of socialist revolution.

Comrade Lenin went on to defend the instructions to the volost committees[126] and spoke of the necessity of breaking with the leading organs, such as the army committees, the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Deputies, etc. We adopted our law on the volost committees, he said, from the peasants. The peasants want land and the prohibition of hired labour; they want implements for the cultivation of the soil. And this cannot be obtained without defeating capital. You want land, we said to them, but the land is mortgaged and belongs to Russian and world capital. You are throwing down a challenge to capital, you are following a different path from ours; but we are at one with you in that we are marching, and must march, towards the social revolution. As for the Constituent Assembly, the speaker said that its work will depend on the mood in the country, but he added, trust in the mood, but don't forget your rifles.

Comrade Lenin went on to deal with the question of the war. When he referred to the removal of Dukhonin and the appointment of Krylenko as Commander-in-Chief, there was laughter among the audience. It may be funny to you, he retorted, but the soldiers will condemn you for this laughter. If there are people here who think it funny that we removed a counter-revolutionary general and appointed Krylenko, who is against the general and has gone to conduct negotiations,[127] we have nothing to say to them. We have nothing in common with those who do not recognise

the need to fight the counter-revolutionary generals. Rather than have anything to do with such people we prefer to retire from power, go underground if necessary.

Pravda No. 190,
November 28 (15), 1917

Published according to the *Pravda* text

3
DRAFT RESOLUTION

The Peasants' Congress fully and in every way supports the law (decree) on land of October 26, 1917, approved by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and published by the Council of People's Commissars as the provisional workers' and peasants' government of the Russian Republic. The Peasants' Congress declares its firm and unshakable resolve to ensure the implementation of this law, calls upon all peasants to support it unanimously and to carry it out themselves in the localities without delay, and also to elect to all and every responsible post and office only people who have proved not in word but in deed their complete devotion to the interests of the working and exploited peasants, their readiness and ability to uphold these interests against any resistance the landowners, capitalists, and their supporters or accomplices may offer.

The Peasants' Congress also expresses its conviction that the full implementation of all the measures constituting the law on land is possible only if the workers' socialist revolution which began on October 25 is successful, for only the socialist revolution can ensure the transfer of the land to the working peasantry without compensation, the confiscation of the landowners' implements, full protection of the interests of agricultural wage-workers and the immediate commencement of the unconditional abolition of the entire system of capitalist wage-slavery, the proper and planned distribution of the products of both agriculture and industry among the various regions and the population of the country, control over the banks (without such con-

trol the people will not be masters of the land even though private property in land is abolished), all-round state assistance specifically to the working and exploited people, etc.

Therefore the Peasants' Congress, fully supporting the Revolution of October 25, and supporting it precisely as a socialist revolution, declares its unswerving resolve to carry out, with due gradualness but without the slightest vacillation, measures aimed at the socialist transformation of the Russian Republic.

A necessary condition for the victory of the socialist revolution, which alone can secure the lasting triumph and full implementation of the law on land, is the close alliance of the working and exploited peasantry with the working class—the proletariat—in all the advanced countries. In the Russian Republic the entire organisation and administration of the state from top to bottom must henceforth be based on such an alliance. Rejecting all and every attempt, direct and indirect, overt and covert, to return to a course that experience has rejected, to the course of conciliation with the bourgeoisie and the champions of bourgeois policy, this alliance alone can ensure the victory of socialism the world over.

Written on November 14 (27), 1917

Published in *Izvestia* No. 226, November 15 (28), 1917

Published according to the *Izvestia* text

4
SPEECH IN CONNECTION WITH THE STATEMENT OF A VIKZHEL SPOKESMAN
NOVEMBER 18 (DECEMBER 1)

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Comrades, the Vikzhel statement is undoubtedly nothing but a misunderstanding. Can you imagine, for one moment, that troops, fully aware of their revolutionary duty and fighting for the people's interests, would approach Field Headquarters and begin smashing up everything and everyone, without making known their demands, without so much as explaining to the soldiers around H.Q. why they had come. You must realise, comrades, that that is impossible. A revolutionary army, conscious of what it is about, must make its demands known to those to whom it applies. When the demands were being made, much more was done, care was taken to make it quite clear that resistance meant resisting the people's will, that this was not a common but a moral crime against the people's freedom, interests and highest aspirations. A revolutionary army never fires the first shot, and acts in anger only against invaders and tyrants. Had it been otherwise, the word revolution would have lost its meaning. I feel I must draw your attention to the fact that while making its unverified charges, Vikzhel announces its "neutrality". That is something Vikzhel has no right to do. At a time of revolutionary struggle, when every minute counts, when dissent and neutrality allow the enemy to put in his word, when he will certainly be heard, and when no haste is made to help the people in their struggle for their sacred rights, I cannot call such a stand neutrality; it is not neutrality; a revolutionary would call it incitement. (*Applause.*) By taking such a stand you incite the generals to action; when you fail to support us, you oppose the people.

To postpone the armistice is just what General Dukhonin wants. By assisting him you are sabotaging the armistice. Think of the grave responsibility that falls upon you, and consider what the people will say.

Comrade Lenin went on to say that the telegraph services were being sabotaged in some areas. The government was left without information, while its opponents circulated absurd rumours. Take the allegation that the Polish battalions were opposing the government, although the Poles had repeatedly declared that they had not interfered and did not intend to interfere in Russian affairs; they have also informed us that they want an armistice.

Izvestia No. 230,
November 19, 1917

Published according
to the *Izvestia* text

5
CONCLUDING SPEECH ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION
NOVEMBER 18 (DECEMBER 1)

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Comrade Lenin first showed that the accusation of anarchism made against the Bolsheviks by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries had not been proved.

In what way did socialists differ from anarchists? The anarchists did not recognise state power whereas the socialists, the Bolsheviks among them, did recognise it in the period of transition between the state of affairs then obtaining and the socialism towards which they were progressing.

The Bolsheviks favoured a strong authority, but it must be a workers' and peasants' authority.

All state power is compulsion, but until then it had always been the power of the minority, the power of the landowner and capitalist employed against the worker and peasant.

He said that the Bolsheviks stood for the state power that would be a firm authority of the majority of the workers and peasants employed against the capitalists and landowners.

Comrade Lenin then went on to show that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' resolution on the land had called the new government a people's socialist government, and dwelt on the points that could closely unite the Bolsheviks and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The alliance of the peasants and-workers was a basis for an agreement between the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks.

It was an honest coalition, an honest alliance, but it would be an honest coalition at the summit too, between the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks, if the

Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were more definite in stating their conviction that the revolution was a socialist revolution. It was a socialist revolution. The abolition of private property in land, the introduction of workers' control, the nationalisation of the banks—all these were measures that would lead to socialism. They were not socialism, but they were measures that would lead to socialism by gigantic strides. The Bolsheviks did not promise the workers and peasants milk and honey immediately, but they did say that a close alliance between the workers and the exploited peasantry, a firm, unwavering struggle for the power of the Soviets would lead to socialism, and any party that really wanted to be a people's party would have to state clearly and decisively that the revolution was a socialist revolution.

And only in the event of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries stating that clearly and unambiguously would the Bolsheviks' alliance with them grow and become stronger.

It had been said that the Bolsheviks were against the socialisation of the land and could not, therefore, come to an agreement with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The Bolsheviks answered that they were indeed against the Socialist-Revolutionaries' socialisation of the land but that did not prevent an honest alliance with them.

Today or tomorrow the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries would nominate their Minister of Agriculture, and the Bolsheviks would not vote against a law on the socialisation of the land if he proposed it; they would abstain from voting.

In conclusion Comrade Lenin stressed that only an alliance of workers and peasants could acquire land and make peace.

Among other things Comrade Lenin was asked what the Bolsheviks would do in the Constituent Assembly if the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were there in a minority and proposed a bill on the socialisation of the land—would the Bolsheviks abstain from voting? Of course not. The Bolsheviks would vote for the bill but would make the proviso that they were voting for it in order to support the peasants against their enemies.

Pravda No. 195,
December 4 (November 21), 1917

Published according
to the *Pravda* text

ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEASANTS

A LETTER TO *PRAVDA*

Today, Saturday, November 18, in the course of a speech I made at the Peasants' Congress, I was publicly asked a question to which I forthwith replied. It is essential that this question and my reply should immediately be made known to all the reading public, for while formally speaking only in my own name, I was actually speaking in the name of the whole Bolshevik Party.

The matter was the following.

Touching on the question of an alliance between the Bolshevik workers and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, whom many peasants at present trust, I argued in my speech that this alliance *can* be an "honest coalition", an honest alliance, for there is *no* radical divergence of interests between the wage-workers and the working and exploited peasants. Socialism is *fully* able to meet the interests of both. *Only* socialism can meet their interests. Hence the possibility and necessity for an "honest coalition" between the proletarians and the working and exploited peasantry. On the contrary, a "coalition" (alliance) between the working and exploited classes, on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie, on the other, *cannot* be an "honest coalition" because of the radical divergence of interests between these classes.

Imagine, I said, that there is a majority of Bolsheviks and a minority of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the government, or even, let us assume, only one Left Socialist-Revolutionary—the Commissar of Agriculture. Could the Bolsheviks practise an honest coalition under such circumstances?

They could; for, while they are irreconcilable in their fight against the counter-revolutionary elements (including the Right Socialist-Revolutionary and the defencist elements), the Bolsheviks would be obliged to *abstain* from voting on questions which concern purely Socialist-Revolutionary points in the land programme approved by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Such, for instance, would be the point on equal land tenure and the redistribution of land among the small holders.

By abstaining from voting on such a point the Bolsheviks would not be changing their programme in the slightest. For, given the victory of socialism (workers' control over the factories, to be followed by their expropriation, the nationalisation of the banks, and the creation of a Supreme Economic Council for the regulation of the entire economic life of the country)—given that the workers *would be obliged to agree* to the transitional measures proposed by the small working and exploited peasants, provided such measures were *not detrimental* to the cause of socialism. Even Kautsky, when he was still a Marxist (1899-1909), frequently admitted—I said—that the measures of transition to socialism cannot be identical in countries with large-scale and those with small-scale farming.

We Bolsheviks would be obliged to abstain from voting when such a point was being decided in the Council of People's Commissars or in the Central Executive Committee, for if the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (as well as the peasants who support them) agreed to workers' control, to the nationalisation of the banks, etc., equal land tenure would be only one of the measures of *transition* to full socialism. For the proletariat to *impose* such transitional measures would be absurd; it is obliged, in the interests of the victory of socialism, to *yield* to the small working and exploited peasants in the choice of these transitional measures, for they could do *no harm* to the cause of socialism.

Thereupon, a Left Socialist-Revolutionary (it was Comrade Feofilaktov, if I am not mistaken) asked me the following question:

"How would the Bolsheviks act if in the Constituent Assembly the peasants wanted to pass a law on equal land

tenure, while the bourgeoisie were opposed to the peasants and the decision depended on the Bolsheviks?"

I replied: under such circumstances, when the cause of socialism would be ensured by the introduction of workers' control, the nationalisation of the banks, etc., the alliance between the workers and the working and exploited peasants would make it obligatory for the party of the proletariat to vote for the peasants and against the bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks, in my opinion, would be entitled when the vote was being taken to make a declaration of dissent, to place on record their non-agreement, etc., but to abstain from voting under such circumstances would be to betray their allies *in the fight for socialism* because of a difference with them on a partial issue. The Bolsheviks would never betray the peasants in such a situation. Equal land tenure and like measures *cannot* prejudice socialism if the power is in the hands of a workers' and peasants' government, if workers' control has been introduced, the banks nationalised, a workers' and peasants' supreme economic body set up to direct (regulate) the *entire* economic life of the country, and so forth.

Such was my reply.

N. Lenin

Written on November 18 (December 1), 1917

Published in *Pravda* No. 194, December 2 (November 19), 1917

Published according to the *Pravda* text

DRAFT DECREE ON THE RIGHT OF RECALL[128]

No elective institution or representative assembly can be regarded as being truly democratic and really representative of the people's will unless the electors' right to recall those elected is accepted and exercised. This fundamental principle of true democracy applies to all representative assemblies without exception, including the Constituent Assembly.

Because the system of proportional representation is more democratic than the majority system, it demands more complex measures for the exercise of the right of recall, that is, the actual subordination of the elected to the people. But it would be betraying democracy and abdicating the basic principles and tasks of the socialist revolution, which has begun in Russia, to refuse, on that ground, to practise the right of recall, or to hamper or restrict its exercise in any way. What proportional representation demands is not a curtailment of the right of recall but a mere change of form.

Since the system of proportional representation is based on acceptance of the party system and the conduct of elections by organised parties, any major change in the balance of class forces and the relation of classes to parties, especially in the event of splits within major parties, necessarily produces the need for a re-election in any electoral district where there is a clear and obvious discrepancy between the will of the various classes and their strength, on the one hand, and the party composition of those elected, on the other. True democracy makes it imperative that the appointment of re-elections should not depend only on the institution to be re-elected, that is, that the desire on the part

of those elected to retain their seats should not work against the exercise of the people's will to recall its representatives.

In view of this, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, resolves:

The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies of each electoral district shall have the right to appoint re-elections to all city, Zemstvo and all other representative institutions in general, not excluding the Constituent Assembly. The Soviets shall also have the right to set the date for the re-elections, which shall be held in the usual manner, in strict conformity with the principles of the system of proportional representation.

Written on November 19
(December 2), 1917

Published in *Minutes of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies, Second Convocation*, Moscow, 1918

Published according to the manuscript

REPORT ON THE RIGHT OF RECALL AT A MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 21 (DECEMBER 4), 1917

The question of re-election is one of actually implementing the democratic principle. It is the accepted practice in all leading countries that only the elected are entitled to speak in the language of state legislation. But having allowed the right of summons for the conduct of affairs of state, the bourgeoisie intentionally withheld the right of recall—the right of actual control.

In all revolutionary periods in history, a prominent feature in the struggle for constitutional changes has been the fight for the right of recall.

Democratic representation exists and is accepted under all parliamentary systems, but this right of representation is curtailed by the fact that the people have the right to cast their votes once in every two years, and while it often turns out that their votes have installed those who help to oppress them, they are deprived of the democratic right to put a stop to that by removing these men.

But this democratic right of recall has survived in countries with old democratic traditions, for instance, in some cantons of Switzerland and some states of America.

Any great revolution clearly confronts the people not only with the use of existing statutes but also with the framing of appropriate new statutes. It is necessary, therefore, in view of the impending convocation of the Constituent Assembly, to review the new electoral statutes.

The Soviets have been created by the working people themselves, by their revolutionary energy and initiative, and that is the only guarantee of their working entirely to promote the interests of the masses. The truly popular

nature of the Soviets is evident in the fact that every peasant sends his representatives to the Soviet and is also entitled to recall them.

Various parties in this country have been in power. The last time power passed from one party to another there was a revolution, a rather stormy revolution, but if we had had the right of recall, a simple vote would have sufficed.

There is this word freedom. In the old days it meant freedom for the bourgeoisie to manipulate its millions for swindling, freedom to use its forces through such swindling. We have done with the bourgeoisie and that kind of freedom. The state is an institution for coercion. In the old days, it was the coercion of the whole people by a handful of money-bags. We want to turn the state into an institution enforcing the will of the people. We want to institute coercion in the working people's interests.

Failure to grant the right of recall from the Constituent Assembly is failure to elicit the revolutionary will of the people, it is usurpation of the people's rights. We do have proportional representation, which is indeed the most democratic. Under this system it may be somewhat difficult to introduce the right of recall but the difficulties entailed are purely technical and are fairly easy to overcome. In any case there is no contradiction between proportional representation and the right of recall.

The people do not cast their votes for individuals but for parties. The party spirit is rather strong in Russia, and as far as the people are concerned each party has a definite political character. That is why any party split must bring confusion unless the right of recall is provided for. The Socialist-Revolutionary Party enjoyed great influence. But a split occurred after the election lists had been put out. The lists cannot be altered, nor can the convocation of the Constituent Assembly be postponed. As a result, the people actually voted for a party which had ceased to exist. This was proved by the Left-wing Second Peasant Congress.[129] It turned out that the peasants were not misled by individuals but by the party split. This state of things needs to be set right. The direct, consistent and immediate democratic principle, namely, the right of recall, must be introduced.

One thing we should be wary of is being faced with an unrepresentative election. Given a high level of mass consciousness—compare the revolutions of 1905 and 1917—there is nothing to fear from introducing the right of re-election.

The people were told that the Soviet is a plenipotentiary organ: they believed it and acted upon that belief. The process of democratisation must be carried forward and the right of recall introduced.

The right of recall should be given to the Soviets, as the best embodiment of the idea of state power, of coercion. The transfer of power from one party to another may then take place peacefully, by mere re-election.

Pravda No. 196, December 5 (November 22), 1917 and *Soldatskaya Pravda* No. 87, November 24, 1917

Published according to the *Soldatskaya Pravda* text

SPEECH AT THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF THE NAVY[130] NOVEMBER 22 (DECEMBER 5), 1917

MINUTES

On behalf of the Council of People's Commissars Comrade Lenin greeted the army of sailors, assembled in congress, who have proved themselves to be dedicated fighters for the liberation of the working classes.

Lenin went on to analyse the current situation. He said the Kerensky government's collapse had been inevitable in view of its policy of conciliation, which was not aimed at satisfying the needs of the broad masses, and was based on the principle of safeguarding all the interests of the bourgeoisie, the oppressor class. He continued:

"But alongside the Provisional Government were the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which were produced by the revolutionary initiative of the insurgent people, and which, as time goes on, are rallying ever wider sections of the working masses. In Russia the people have produced and given support to a truly popular government, something no other European revolution has achieved, and the credit for this accrues to the Soviets alone. The oppressed masses were confronted with a highly difficult task, that of building a new state on their own. You can see how much effort the bourgeoisie has thrown into its resistance to us, how attempts are being made to sabotage our activity, and what a flood of lies and slander is being poured on us in and out of season.

"Accusations of terrorism and violence are being heaped on us, but we take these in our stride. We say we are not anarchists, and are committed to establishing a state. However, the capitalist state has to be smashed and the power of the capitalists destroyed. It is our task to build a new

socialist state. We shall be working tirelessly towards that goal, and we shall be neither intimidated nor deterred by any obstacles. Evidence of this is to be seen in the new Government's first steps. But the transition to a new system is an extremely involved process and requires a firm government to make it easier. Until recently, power has been in the hands of monarchs and the henchmen of the bourgeoisie. All their efforts and policies have served the purpose of coercing the masses. By contrast we say: there must be firm power, coercion is necessary, but we shall direct it against the handful of capitalists, the bourgeois class. We shall always retaliate with coercion against any attempts—hopeless and mad attempts they must be—to resist Soviet power. In every case, responsibility for this will fall upon those who resist."

Comrade Lenin then discussed the establishment of a state machine which, in the interests of the people, should be free from red tape and should leave a lot of room for the operation of the nation's creative forces. He went on:

"The bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectual sections of the population are subverting the people's power in every possible way. The working masses have no one to look to but themselves. There is no doubt that the great tasks facing the people are tremendously difficult. But there is need for self-assurance, there is need for all the elements awakened among the people and capable of action to join existing organisations and those that will be set up by the working masses. Divided the masses are helpless; united they are strong. They have gained self-assurance and, refusing to be put out by the bourgeoisie's badgering, they have set about running the state on their own. Difficulties may crop up at the start, due to inadequate training. But the art of practical government, which has been monopolised by the bourgeoisie, must be mastered. In this respect the Navy has shown itself to be well to the fore, offering a brilliant example of the creative capacity latent in the working masses."

Comrade Lenin then went on to discuss in detail the major questions of the current situation: land, workers' policy, the nationalities problem, and peace.

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies adopted the Decree on Land, in

which the Bolsheviks reproduced the principles stated in the peasant mandates in their entirety. This was a departure from the Social-Democratic programme, for the mandates were drawn up in the spirit of the Socialist-Revolutionaries' programme, but this was proof that the people's power had no intention of imposing its will on the people but tried to meet them half-way.

Whatever the solution of the land problem, whatever the programme serving as a basis for the transfer of the land to the peasants, it would in no way hamper the strong alliance of the workers and peasants. The important thing was that if the peasants had pressed for the abolition of landownership for ages, it had to be abolished.

The speaker emphasised the tremendous importance of having a strong alliance of workers and peasants, for the question of land was closely bound up with that of industry, and the agrarian revolution had to go hand in hand with a ploughing up of capitalist relations.

The onward march of the Russian revolution had shown that the slavish policy of conciliating the landowners and capitalists had been a soap bubble. The will of the majority would be uppermost; it would be carried- out by a working people's alliance, an honest alliance of workers and peasants on the basis of their common interests. Parties came and went, but the working people remained, and the speaker urged dedication to the strengthening of this alliance.

Let the Navy, he said, dedicate itself to keeping this alliance as the foundation of state affairs; if it remained sound, nothing could frustrate the cause of transition to socialism.

Turning to the nationalities question, Lenin said, we should take note of Russia's highly patchy national composition, with the Russians making up only about 40 per cent, and the majority consisting of other nationalities. National oppression under the tsars, unmatched in savagery and absurdity, turned the rightless nationalities into great reservoirs of fierce hatred for the monarchs. It was not surprising that all Russians had been included in their hatred for those who went to the extent of prohibiting the use of the mother tongue, and doomed masses of people to illiteracy. It was assumed that the privileged Russians would try to retain

the advantages which had been so assiduously preserved for them by Nicholas II and Kerensky.

"We are told that Russia will disintegrate and split up into separate republics but we have no reason to fear this. We have nothing to fear, whatever the number of independent republics. The important thing for us is not where the state border runs, but whether or not the working people of all nations remain allied in their struggle against the bourgeoisie, irrespective of nationality. (*Stormy applause.*)

"If the Finnish bourgeoisie are buying arms from the Germans in order to use them against their workers, we offer the latter an alliance with the Russian working people. Let the bourgeoisie start their filthy petty squabbles and their trading over frontiers, the workers of all countries and nationalities will not fall out over that sort of thing. (*Stormy applause.*)

"We are now 'conquering' Finland—this is using a nasty word—but not the way the robber barons of international capitalism conquered it. We are winning Finland over by giving her complete freedom to live in alliance with us or with others, guaranteeing full support for the working people of all nationalities against the bourgeoisie of all countries. It is not an alliance based on treaties, but on the solidarity of the exploited against the exploiters.

"We now see a national movement in the Ukraine and we say that we stand unconditionally for the Ukrainian people's complete and unlimited freedom. We have to wipe out that old bloodstained and dirty past when the Russia of the capitalist oppressors acted as the executioner of other peoples. We are determined to wipe out that past, and leave no trace of it. (*Stormy applause.*)

"We are going to tell the Ukrainians that as Ukrainians they can go ahead and arrange their life as they see fit. But we are going to stretch out a fraternal hand to the Ukrainian workers and tell them that together with them we are going to fight against their bourgeoisie and ours. Only a socialist alliance of the working people of all countries can remove all ground for national persecution and strife. (*Stormy applause.*)

"I shall now touch on the question of war. We have started a resolute struggle against the war brought on by the clash

of robbers over their spoils. Until now all parties have spoken of this struggle but have not gone beyond words and hypocrisy. Now the struggle for peace is on. It is a difficult struggle. It is highly naïve to think that peace can be easily attained, and that the bourgeoisie will hand it to us on Q platter as soon as we mention it. Those who ascribed this view to the Bolsheviks were cheating. The capitalists are embroiled in a life and death struggle over the share-out of the booty. One thing is clear: to kill war is to defeat capital, and Soviet power has started the struggle to that end. We have published and will continue to publish secret treaties. We are not going to be deterred in this by anyone's anger or slander. The bourgeois gentlemen are beside themselves because the people see why they have been driven to the slaughter. They threaten Russia with the prospect of another war, in which she will find herself isolated. But we are not going to be deterred by the bourgeoisie's fierce hatred for us and for our peace movement. It will be quite futile for them to try to incite the peoples against each other in this fourth year of the war. They are sure to fail. It is not only in this country, but in all the belligerent countries that the struggle against the imperialist government at home is welling up. There has been an open mutiny in the navy even in Germany, which the imperialists tried for decades to turn into an armed camp with the entire government machine geared to stamping out the slightest sign of popular discontent. To understand the significance of this mutiny, one has to be aware that police reprisals in Germany are unparalleled. But revolution is not made to order; it results from an outburst of mass indignation. Whereas it was quite easy to drive out a band of nitwits, like Romanov and Rasputin,[131] it is immensely more difficult to fight against the organised and strong clique of German imperialists, both crowned and uncrowned. But we can and have to work hand in hand with the revolutionary class of working people in all countries. That is the path the Soviet Government has taken by making public the secret treaties and showing that the rulers of all countries are brigands. That is not propaganda by word but by deed." (*Stormy applause*.)

In conclusion the speaker dealt with the question of the peace talks and said:

"When the Germans gave an evasive reply to our demand not to transfer any troops to the Western and Italian fronts, we broke off the talks and shall resume them in a little while. And when we do tell this to the world, no German worker will remain ignorant of the fact that the peace talks had been broken off through no fault of ours. In the hypothetical case of the German working class siding with their government of imperialist plunderers and confronting us with the need to continue the war, the Russian people—who have always shed blood without a murmur, and have done the will of an oppressive government when quite ignorant of its aims and purposes—will undoubtedly throw their weight into the struggle with so much more courage and vigour when it came to fighting for socialism and freedom threatened with the bayonets of the world bourgeoisie. But we put our trust in the international solidarity of the working masses, who will surmount every obstacle and barrier in the struggle for socialism." (*Stormy applause.*)

Izvestia No. 235,
November 25, 1917

Published according to a typewritten text of the Minutes verified with the text of the newspaper *Izvestia*

FOREWORD TO THE PAMPHLET, *MATERIAL ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION*

The present pamphlet is a collection (made on the initiative of one of the Bolsheviks and not the author's) of my most important articles and speeches on the land question which are suitable for popular reading. They date from the end of April to the end of October 1917, and are supplemented by the Resolution of the April Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(Bolsheviks),* and the Decree on Land, adopted by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on October 26, 1917.** I wrote the original texts (that is, the *drafts*) of both these documents.

Taken together, these documents and articles give an accurate picture of how Bolshevik views developed over the six months of the revolution and how these views were applied in practice.

I also refer the reader to my article, "From a Publicist's Diary. Peasants and Workers", in the newspaper *Rabochy* (Petersburg, September 11 (August 29), 1917, No. 6).*** It gives a detailed analysis of the summarised peasants' Mandate which appeared in *Izvestia Vserossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov* No. 88, of August 19, and which was incorporated in the Decree on Land of October 26, 1917.

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* See present edition, Vol. 24.—*Ed.*
** See pp. 258-60 of this volume.—*Ed.*
*** See present edition, Vol. 25.—*Ed.*

Two months before the October 25 revolution, this article explained that it was necessary for the workers "to change the basic line pursued by the worker in addressing the peasant".

N. Lenin

Petersburg.
November 27, 1917.

Published in December 1917 in the pamphlet, N. Lenin, *Material on the Agrarian Question*, Priboi Publishers, Petersburg

Published according to the pamphlet text

OUTLINE PROGRAMME FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS[132]

(1) The talks shall be political and economic.

(2) The main theme of the political talks and the basic principle shall be: "*No annexations or indemnities*".

(3) Concept of annexation:

(a) *non*-acceptability of the definition of annexation as lands integrated after the proclamation of the present war.*

(b) any territory shall be deemed to be annexed whose population, over the last few decades (since the second half of the 19th century), has expressed dissatisfaction with the integration of their territory into another state, or its status in the state, regardless of whether such dissatisfaction has been expressed in writings, decisions of meetings, assemblies, municipal councils and similar institutions, in state and diplomatic acts, arising from the national movement in these territories, in national friction, clashes, disturbances, etc.[133]

(1) Official recognition for each (non-sovereign) nation, which is part of a given belligerent country, of the right to free self-determination, including secession and formation of an independent state; (2) the right to self-determination shall be realised through a referendum of the whole population of the territory seeking self-determination; (3) the geographical boundaries of the territory seeking self-determination shall be established by democratically elected representatives of the territory and contiguous territories; (4) preliminary conditions guaranteeing the exercise of the right of nations to free self-determination:

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* The definition of annexation under which only lands integrated after the proclamation of the war are regarded as annexed is rejected.

(a) withdrawal of troops from the territory seeking self-determination;

(b) return to the territory of refugees and inhabitants expelled by the authorities since the outbreak of war;

(c) establishment in the given territory of a caretaker administration consisting of democratically elected representatives of the nation seeking self-determination, with the right (among others) of implementing Clause (b);

(d) establishment under the caretaker administration of commissions of the contracting parties with the right of reciprocal control;

(e) the expenditure on implementing Clauses (b) and (c) shall be covered from a special fund set up by the occupying party.

Written on November 27
(December 10), 1917

First published in 1929
in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according
to the manuscript

DECREE ON THE ARREST OF THE LEADERS OF THE CIVIL WAR AGAINST THE REVOLUTION[134]

Members of leading bodies of the Cadet Party, as a party of enemies of the people, are liable to arrest and trial by revolutionary tribunal.

Local Soviets are ordered to exercise special surveillance over the Cadet Party in view of its connection with the Kornilov-Kaledin civil war against the revolution.

This decree enters into effect from the time of signing.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

Petrograd, November 28, 1917,
10.30 p.m.

Pravda No. 23 (evening edition), December 12 (November 29), 1917 and *Izvestia* No. 239, November 29, 1917

Published according to the manuscript

THE TASKS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN PETROGRAD

It takes knowledge to participate in the revolution with intelligence, purpose and success.

Because tsarism had played havoc with public education over a period of many years, the library service in Petrograd is in a very bad state.

The following changes, based on principles long practised in the free countries of the West, especially Switzerland and the United States, must be made immediately and unconditionally:

(1) The public library (the former Imperial Library) must immediately start an *exchange* of books with *all* public and state libraries in Petrograd and the provinces and with *foreign* libraries (in Finland, Sweden, *etc.*).

(2) The forwarding of books *from one library to another* must be made *post-free* by law.

(3) The library's reading-room must be open, as is the practice with *private* libraries and reading-rooms for the *rich* in civilised countries,

from 8.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m. daily, *not* excluding Sundays and holidays.

(4) The required personnel must be immediately transferred to the Public Library from the various offices of the Ministry of Education (with more women, in view of the military demand for men), where nine-tenths of the staff are engaged not merely in useless, but in downright harmful work.

Written in November 1917

First published in 1933
in *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Published according
to the manuscript

MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECEMBER 1 (14), 1917

1
SPEECH ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY[135]

Considered apart from the circumstances of the class war, which has developed into civil war, we so far do not know of a more perfect institution for determining the will of the people than the Constituent Assembly. But we must not indulge in fancies. The Constituent Assembly will have to function under civil war conditions; the Kaledinite bourgeois elements have started a civil war.

After attempting to drag out the insurrection in Moscow, after the unsuccessful attempt on the part of Kerensky to bring troops against Petrograd, after the fruitless attempt to organise the counter-revolutionary high-ranking officers of the army, these elements are now endeavouring to organise an uprising on the Don. The attempt is hopeless, since the working Cossacks are opposed to the Kaledinites.

Replying to the charge of persecuting the Cadet Party, Comrade Lenin said: "The class struggle must not be regarded separately from one's political opponents. When it is said that the Cadet Party is not a strong group, it is not true. The Cadet Central Committee is the political general staff of the bourgeois class. The Cadets have absorbed all propertied classes; they have been joined by elements that stood to the right of the Cadets. They all support the Cadet Party.

"We are being called upon to convene the Constituent Assembly in the form in which it was first planned. Under no circumstances. It was planned against the interests of the people. We made the revolution so as to have guarantees that the Constituent Assembly would not be used against the people, and in order that the guarantees would be in the

hands of the government. Our decree states clearly and unambiguously when the Constituent Assembly will be convened.[136] It contains an exact answer to that question. Do not try any thought-reading—we are concealing nothing. We said that we shall convene the Constituent Assembly as soon as four hundred deputies have arrived. We are not to blame that the elections took place later than appointed. In certain localities the Soviets themselves appointed later election dates. Since the elections were held on various dates, it was necessary to determine how many deputies are required in order to open the Constituent Assembly. An attempt to convene it irrespective of the number of deputies present has been made, taking advantage of the fact that the number is not indicated in the law. What would be the position of a government that permitted such a thing? The Soviet government did the right thing in decreeing the number of deputies necessary for the Constituent Assembly to be deemed properly constituted. That is what the Soviet government did. Those who are not in agreement should criticise the decree. But if we hear insinuations and guesses instead of criticism, we brush them aside.

"When a revolutionary class is fighting the propertied classes that offer resistance, the resistance must be crushed. And we shall crush the resistance of the propertied classes, using the same means as they used to crush the proletariat—no other means have been invented.

"You said the bourgeoisie must be isolated. But the Cadets are actually starting civil war under cover of a formally democratic demand, the demand for a Constituent Assembly. They say they want to sit in the Constituent Assembly and organise civil war at the same time. And you reply to that by talk about isolation.

"We are not merely persecuting non-observers of formalities, we are levelling direct political accusations against a political party. The French revolutionaries acted in this way. This is our reply to those peasants who elected without realising whom they were electing. Let the people know that the Constituent Assembly is being summoned in a way somewhat different from what Kerensky intended. We have introduced the right of recall, and the Constituent Assembly will not be quite the thing the bourgeoisie planned. Although

only a few days remain before the Constituent Assembly is summoned, the bourgeoisie are organising civil war, intensifying sabotage and undermining the armistice. We shall not let ourselves be deceived by formal slogans. The bourgeoisie would like to sit in the Constituent Assembly and at the same time organise civil war. Let them examine the substance of our accusation against the Cadet Party; let them prove that the Cadet Party is not the general staff of the civil war, an obviously hopeless war that is drenching the country in blood. Comrade Steinberg has not attempted to prove that. He has forgotten all that has been revealed about the contacts between the Cadets and Kornilov; it was not we, but Chernov, our political opponent, who revealed those contacts. It is proposed that we catch the little men, but we shall not hunt for particular individuals in order to hide our political accusation against the general staff of a whole class."

Comrade Lenin then dealt with the remark that the Bolsheviks had also been proclaimed enemies of the people.

"They threatened to proclaim us enemies of the people," he said, "but they did not do so. They did not dare. We said to them at that time, 'Well, try it, if you can; try to tell the people that the Bolshevik Party, as a party, as a trend, is the enemy of the people'. They did not dare; they hunted down individuals, they resorted to slander. We said, 'You cannot proclaim us enemies of the people; you have not a single objection in principle to bring against the Bolsheviks; all you can do is to spread calumnies.' Our accusation against the Cadet Party puts an end to petty manoeuvres in the political struggle. We shall tell the people the truth. We shall tell the people that their interests are superior to the interests of a democratic institution. We must not return to the old prejudices, which subordinate the interests of the people to formal democracy. The Cadets cry, All Power to the Constituent Assembly. But what they mean in fact is, All Power to Kaledin. The people must be told that, and the people will approve our action."

Published in *Pravda* No. 207, December 19 (6), 1917

Published according to the *Pravda* text

2
RESOLUTION ON THE DECREE CONCERNING THE CADET PARTY

Having heard the explanations by spokesmen of the Council of People's Commissars concerning the Decree declaring the Cadets a party of enemies of the people and ordering the arrest of the members of that Party's governing bodies, and surveillance by the Soviets over the party as a whole, the Central Executive Committee reaffirms the need to press forward the most vigorous struggle against bourgeois counter-revolution, which is led by the Cadet Party, and which has started a fierce civil war against the very foundations of the workers' and peasants' revolution.

The Central Executive Committee assures the Council of People's Commissars of its continued support in this matter and rejects the protests of political groups whose vacillation has been undermining the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants.

Izvestia No. 243,
December 3, 1917

Published according to the *Izvestia* text

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES DECEMBER 2 (15), 1917[137]

Comrades, at the last Extraordinary Congress of Peasants' Deputies I spoke as a member of the Bolshevik group and not as a member of the Council of People's Commissars, I am speaking in the same capacity today, for I consider it important that the opinion of the Party of the Bolsheviks should be known to this Congress of Peasants' Deputies.

When I arrived here I heard part of the speech of the last speaker, who, turning to me, told you that I wanted to disperse you at the point of the bayonet. Comrades, Russia has grown too mature to suffer anyone to rule her. You know that from the moment the army turned their weapons to win freedom, from the moment it became possible for the peasant in uniform to meet and arrange matters with the peasant not in uniform, from that moment there has been no force that can break the will of the people, the will of the peasants and workers.

Comrades, I want to tell you how we understand the Revolution of October 25. Comrades, it has been said here that a new wave of revolution may sweep the Soviets away. I say "No". I am firmly convinced that the Soviets will never perish; the Revolution of October 25 proved that. The Soviets will never perish, for they were formed as far back as the first revolution of 1905; they were formed after the February revolution, and they were not formed on the initiative of any individual, but from below, by the will of

the masses. There can be no restrictions and no red tape, for they have been formed by the will of the people, and the people are free to recall their representatives at any moment. The Soviets are superior to any parliament, they are superior to any constituent assembly. (*Commotion and cries*: That's a lie!) The Party of the Bolsheviks has always declared that the supreme body is the Soviets. That cannot be called a lie, because the revolutions in Europe that overthrew monarchies formed bourgeois republics with the help of constituent assemblies. There has never before been a revolution such as ours anywhere in the world. It is said that the Revolution of October 25 created only "a Bolshevik government". I might say that there are not only Bolsheviks in the Council of People's Commissars. Those of you who remember the First Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies will know that the Bolsheviks were then in the minority; but, having learned the meaning of the policy of compromise from experience, the Second Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which represented the people, gave a majority to the Bolshevik Party. When they tell me that bayonets may be directed against the Soviets and shout it from the columns of the hostile press, I simply laugh. The bayonets are in the hands of the workers, the soldiers and the peasants, and as long as they are they will never be directed against the Soviets. Let the counter-revolution turn its bayonets on the Soviets, it will not scare them.

Passing to the question of the Constituent Assembly, I must say that the Constituent Assembly can help only if the people themselves are free to develop and build up a new life. And I ask you: Is that the case?

I am telling you what you all know: "The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath". Comrades, you know how the Constituent Assembly was elected. It was elected by one of the most progressive election methods, for it is not individuals who were elected, but representatives of parties. This is a step forward, for revolutions are made by parties and not by individuals. When the elections to the Constituent Assembly took place there was only one party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party which has the majority in the Constituent Assembly. But that is not the case now.

You will perhaps say that the Bolsheviks also brought that about. No, comrades, that is a universal law. Always and everywhere, the people are slowly and painfully dividing into two camps—that of the dispossessed and downtrodden, of those who are fighting for a brighter future for all working people, and that of those who in one way or another support the landowners and capitalists. When the elections took place the people did not elect those who expressed their will and their desires. You say that we have declared the whole Cadet Party enemies of the people. Yes, we have. And thereby we expressed the will of the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. And now that we are on the threshold of peace and the cessation of the terrible slaughter that has lasted three years, we are convinced that this is the demand of all the working people in all countries. The overthrow of imperialism in Europe is proceeding slowly and painfully, and imperialists in all countries will now see that the people are strong, and in their strength will overthrow all who stand in their way. We shall not be deterred when people who are organising revolt against the workers and peasants, against the Soviets, with the other hand show us their credentials to the Constituent Assembly. In July we were told that we should be proclaimed enemies of the people. And we answered, "Try it". If the bourgeois gentlemen and their followers had only tried to say that to the people openly! But they did not; they resorted to insinuation, slander and mud-slinging. When the bourgeoisie began the civil war (we witnessed it), they incited the officer cadets to revolt. And we, the victors, were merciful to them, the vanquished. More than that, we even spared their military honour. And now, when the Constituent Assembly is being convened, we say: We shall open the Constituent Assembly as soon as four hundred of its members arrive. We see that the conspiracy of the Cadets is continuing, we see that they are organising a revolt against the Soviets in the interests of the money-bags, of greed and riches, and we publicly proclaim them enemies of the people. At a time when the terms of peace will shortly be known, when we are about to have an armistice, when the members of the land committees will be immune from arrest, when the landed estates are being confiscated, and when

control will be established over the factories—at such a time they are conspiring against us, against the Soviets. We therefore declare that the party of the Cadets is a party of the bourgeoisie, that they are enemies of the people, and that we shall fight them.

Izvestia No. 244,
December 6, 1917

Published according
to a typewritten copy
of the Minutes

MANIFESTO TO THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE WITH AN ULTIMATUM TO THE UKRAINIAN RADA[138]

Proceeding from the interests of the unity and fraternal alliance of factory workers and the working and exploited masses in the struggle for socialism, and also from the recognition of these principles by numerous decisions of the organs of revolutionary democracy, the Soviets, and especially the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Council of People's Commissars—the Socialist government of Russia—reaffirms that the right to self-determination belongs to all nations oppressed by tsarism and the Great Russian bourgeoisie, up to and including the right of these nations to secede from Russia.

Accordingly we, the Council of People's Commissars, recognise the People's Ukrainian Republic, and its right to secede from Russia or enter into a treaty with the Russian Republic on federal or similar relations between them.

We, the Council of People's Commissars, recognise at once, unconditionally and without reservations everything that pertains to the Ukrainian people's national rights and national independence.

We have not taken a single step, in the sense of restricting the Finnish people's national rights or national independence, against the bourgeois Finnish Republic, which still remains bourgeois, nor shall we take any steps restricting the national independence of any nation which had been—or desires to be—a part of the Russian Republic.

We accuse the Rada of conducting, behind a screen of national phrases, a double-dealing bourgeois policy, which has long been expressed in the Rada's non-recognition of

the Soviets and of Soviet power in the Ukraine (incidentally, the Rada has refused to convoke a territorial congress of the Ukrainian Soviets immediately, as the Soviets of the Ukraine had demanded). This ambiguous policy, which has made it impossible for us to recognise the Rada as a plenipotentiary representative of the working and exploited masses of the Ukrainian Republic, has lately led the Rada to steps which preclude all possibility of agreement.

These, firstly, were steps to disorganise the front.

The Rada has issued *unilateral* orders moving Ukrainian units and withdrawing them from the front, thereby breaking up the common united front *before* any demarcation, which can be carried out only through a formal agreement between the governments of the two republics.

Secondly, the Rada has started to disarm the Soviet troops stationed in the Ukraine.

Thirdly, the Rada has been extending support to the Cadet-Kaledin plot and revolt against Soviet power. On the patently false plea of "the Don and the Kuban" having autonomous rights, a plea that serves to cover up Kaledin's counter-revolutionary moves, which clash with the interests and demands of the vast majority of the working Cossacks, the Rada has allowed its territory to be crossed by troops on their way to Kaledin, but *has refused transit to any anti-Kaledin troops.*

Even if the Rada had received full formal recognition as the uncontested organ of supreme state power of an independent bourgeois Ukrainian republic, we would have been forced to declare war on it without any hesitation, because of its attitude of unexampled betrayal of the revolution and support of the Cadets and the Kaledinites—the bitterest enemies of the national independence of the peoples of Russia, the enemies of Soviet power and of the working and exploited masses.

At the present time, in view of the circumstances set forth above, the Council of People's Commissars, with the full cognisance of the peoples of the Ukrainian and Russian Republics, asks the Rada[139] to answer the following questions:

1. Will the Rada undertake to give up its attempts to disorganise the common front?

2. Will the Rada undertake to refuse transit to any army units on their way to the Don, the Urals or elsewhere, unless it has the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief?

3. Will the Rada undertake to assist the revolutionary troops in their struggle against the counter-revolutionary Cadet-Kaledin revolt?

4. Will the Rada undertake to stop attempts to disarm the Soviet regiments and the workers' Red Guard in the Ukraine and immediately return arms to those who had been deprived of them?

In the event no satisfactory answer is received to these questions within 48 hours, the Council of People's Commissars will deem the Rada to be in a state of open war with Soviet power in Russia and the Ukraine.

Written on December 3 (16), 1917

Published on December 18 (5), 1917 in *Pravda* No. 206; on December 6, 1917 in *Izvestia* No. 244

Published according to the manuscript

REPORT ON THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF PETROGRAD WORKERS AND THE TASKS OF THE WORKING CLASS, DELIVERED AT A MEETING OF THE WORKERS' SECTION OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES DECEMBER 4 (17), 1917

NEWSPAPER REPORT

The Revolution of October 25 had shown the exceptional political maturity of the proletariat and its ability to stand firm in opposition to the bourgeoisie, said the speaker. The complete victory of socialism, however, would require a tremendous organisational effort filled with the knowledge that the proletariat must become the ruling class.

The proletariat was faced with the tasks of transforming the state system on socialist lines, for no matter how easy it would be to cite arguments in favour of a middle course such a course would be insignificant, the country's economic situation having reached a state that would rule out any middle course. There was no place left for half-measures in the gigantic struggle against imperialism and capitalism.

The point at issue was—win or lose.

The workers should and did understand this; this was obvious because they had rejected half-way, compromise decisions. The more profound the revolution, the greater the number of active workers required to accomplish the replacement of capitalism by a socialist machinery. Even if there were no sabotage, the forces of the petty bourgeoisie would be inadequate. The task was one that could be accomplished only by drawing on the masses, only by the independent activity of the masses. The proletariat, therefore, should not think of improving its position at the moment, but should think of becoming the ruling class. It could not be expected that the rural proletariat would be clearly and firmly conscious of its own interests. Only the working class could be, and every proletarian, conscious of the great pros-

pects, should feel himself to be a leader and carry the masses with him.

The proletariat should become the ruling class in the sense of being the leader of all who work; it should be the ruling class politically.

The illusion that only the bourgeoisie could run the state must be fought against. The proletariat must take the rule of the state upon itself.

The capitalists were doing everything they could to complicate the tasks of the working class. And all working-class organisations—trade unions, factory committees and others—would have to conduct a determined struggle in the economic sphere. The bourgeoisie was spoiling everything, sabotaging everything, in order to wreck the working-class revolution. And the tasks of organising production devolved entirely on the working class. They should do away, once and for all, with the illusion that state affairs or the management of banks and factories were beyond the power of the workers. All this could be solved only by tremendous day-to-day organisational work.

It was essential to organise the exchange of products and introduce regular accounting and control—these were tasks for the working class, and the knowledge necessary for their accomplishment had been provided by factory life.

Every factory committee should concern itself not only with the affairs of its own factory, but should also be an organisation nucleus helping arrange the life of the state as a whole.

It was easy to issue a decree on the abolition of private property, but it must and could be implemented only by the workers themselves. Let there be mistakes—they would be the mistakes of a new class creating a new way of life.

There was not and could not be a definite plan for the organisation of economic life.

Nobody could provide one. But it could be done from below, by the masses, through their experience. Instructions would, of course, be given and ways would be indicated, but it was necessary to begin simultaneously from above and from below.

The Soviets would have to become bodies regulating all production in Russia, but in order that they should not

become staff headquarters without troops, work in the lower echelons was needed....*

The working-class masses must set about the organisation of control and production on a country-wide scale. Not the organisation of individuals, but the organisation of all the working people, would be a guarantee of success; if they achieved that, if they organised economic life, everything opposing them would disappear of its own accord.

Pravda No. 208,
December 20 (7), 1917
and *Soldatskaya Pravda* No. 104,
December 14, 1917

Published according to the *Soldatskaya Pravda* text

* Several illegible words were omitted.—*Ed.*

ON THE OPENING OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

In view of the delay in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, mainly due to the fault of the former All-Russia Electoral Commission, and in view of the formation by counter-revolutionary groups of a special Constituent Assembly Commission in opposition to the Commissariat set up by Soviet power, rumours have been circulated that the Constituent Assembly, as at present constituted, would not be convened at all. The Council of People's Commissars deems it necessary to declare that these are absolutely false rumours, deliberately and maliciously spread by the enemies of the Soviets of Peasants', Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. According to the decree of the Council of People's Commissars, which has been approved by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, the Constituent Assembly is to meet as soon as one-half of its members, namely 400 deputies, are duly registered at the Taurida Palace chancellory.

Vl. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

Published in *Pravda* No. 207,
December 19 (6), 1917

Published according
to the *Pravda* text

DRAFT OF A MANIFESTO TO THE PEASANTRY FROM THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES[140]

The Second All-Russia Peasants' Congress ardently appeals to the peasantry of all the nationalities and peoples of Russia to devote mind and will, and the power of their numbers and their energy to arousing the slumberers and encouraging the irresolute, and from every corner of the country, from every village and every quarter of the large cities, to utter aloud so that all may hear, their weighty and decisive word at this, perhaps the most serious and most responsible, moment of the great Russian revolution.

Peasant comrades, we constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of our country, the vast mass of the working and exploited people. We are the vast mass that champions the lawful and just demands of the working people—first and foremost the demand for land—we fight all forms of oppression and exploitation by the landowners and capitalists.

Peasant comrades, we are the main body of our army, those who have suffered most the inhuman torments of more than three years of the war instigated by kings and capitalists; it has also fallen to our lot to undertake the difficult but thankful and honourable role of vanguard fighters—together with the workers—for freedom, land and peace, and for the complete emancipation of the working people from all oppression and exploitation.

Peasant comrades, consider our appeal, this manifesto issued by peasant deputies to the peasants of all nationalities in Russia. Make known our appeal in every village and in every cottage; discuss it at every meeting and village

assembly and in every peasant body without exception, and make your own firm and unshakable decisions in the localities. For it is chiefly on your decisions, on the decisions of the majority of the people, the decisions of the peasants themselves, that the fate of our native land depends.

The fateful hour is approaching. The last fight is at hand. The whole country and all the nations of our republic are divided into two great camps.

One is the camp of the landowners and capitalists, the rich and their servitors, the state dignitaries and their friends, the bosses of the nation and the champions of the war.

The other is the camp of the factory workers and the working and exploited peasants, the poor people and their friends, the rank-and-file soldiers and the champions of peace, the advocates of a heroic, decisive and bold revolutionary struggle for peace, a struggle in which no mercy will be shown to the oppressors of the people.

The struggle between these two camps has in some parts of the country already assumed the acute form of open and direct civil war, a war of the Soviet armies against a small handful of those who are relying on the power of wealth and who desire to overthrow Soviet power, the power and government of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Peasant comrades, on your weighty, firm and unshakable word much now depends; on it depends the cessation of this civil war; on it depends the possibility in Russia of peacefully transferring all the land to the working people without compensation; on it depends the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism. Peasant comrades, rise to a man; give voice to your demands; draw up *your mandates* in every village. You can make yourselves heard; you can make everyone listen to you!

Peasant comrades, you must in the first place roundly condemn those deputies to the Second All-Russia Peasants' Congress who *split away* from the Congress. Condemn the splitters. Condemn those who are smashing the unity of the peasants, the unity of the working people, the unity of the peasants and workers. These splitters, these breakers of peasant unity, these deserters to the camp of the rich,

to the camp of the landowners and capitalists have committed an outrageous crime. These people call themselves Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Right wing and the Centre, followers of Avksentyev and Chernov. They have betrayed the whole doctrine and programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries; they have deserted to the enemies of socialism, to the suppressors of the revolution. They have broken with the faithful custodians of the doctrine, programme and demands of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party of the internationalist Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who have remained loyal to the interests of the working peasantry. These followers of Avksentyev and Chernov have quit the Second All-Russia Peasants' Congress and refused to submit to the decision of the majority of the peasants in order to carry out the will of the wealthy and the capitalists against the peasants, in order to hinder the cause of peace, in order to prevent the immediate transfer of all the land, without compensation, to the working people, and in order to protect the policy of Avksentyev, Chernov, Maslov and their like, a policy fatal to the peasants.

Condemn these traitors to the peasant cause. By condemning them, you will save many of the weak and wavering, and you will save Russia from insane attempts at civil war—insane, because, apart from shedding rivers of blood in vain, they will change nothing; nothing in the world can shatter the unanimous decision of the workers, soldiers and peasants, the decision of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies.

Condemn these traitors to the peasant cause. Let every village express its confidence in the decisions of the two congresses, the Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets and the Congress of Peasants' Soviets. Let every village *recall* from the Constituent Assembly those deputies from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, or from the Peasants' Soviets and institutions, who have not loudly proclaimed, and proved in practice, their wholehearted acceptance of these decisions.

Peasant comrades, you all know that opponents of the decisions of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-

Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies could be elected and did get elected to the Constituent Assembly as peasant representatives, only *by fraud*. These people, who often call themselves Socialist-Revolutionaries, actually duped the peasants, who did not yet know the truth about the policy of Avksentyev, Chernov and Maslov, a policy of making concessions to the landowners, compromising with the capitalists, and arresting members of the local peasants' land committees. These Avksentyevs, Maslovs and Chernovs deceived the peasants, since the general lists of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party were compiled before October 17, whereas the truth was revealed to the whole of Russia only *after* October 17.

The truth was revealed to the whole of Russia by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, held on October 25 and 26, 1917. The truth was further revealed by Soviet power, the Soviet Government, which was the first to publish the shameful secret treaties, the first to start a really revolutionary struggle for peace, the first to show *in practice* what that struggle should be; and it has already achieved its first success: an armistice on one of the fronts.

The truth was revealed by the Soviet Government when it passed the Decree on Land, thereby unconditionally siding with the peasants and eliminating all possibility of outside interference in the full power of the peasants in the localities.

The truth was revealed by the Second All-Russia Peasants' Congress, which was the first to expose to the peasants, in a special and detailed resolution, the shameful role played by the Avksentyev-Chernov Executive Committee. The congress will close on December 8, having begun (?)[141] on November 30, 1917.

You thus see, peasant comrades, that when the lists were drawn up on October 17, and during the elections to the Constituent Assembly on November 12, the peasants *still could not* have known the truth about land and peace, and *still could not* distinguish their friends from their enemies, from the wolves in sheep's clothing. You see that those Socialist-Revolutionaries who oppose the decisions of the Second All-Russia Congress of Workers' and Soldiers'

Deputies and of the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies can speak in the name of the peasants *only by fraud.*

Peasant comrades, do not allow blood to be shed *because of this fraud*! Raise your voices in determined protest against those who quitted the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies. Draw up your *mandates* in every gubernia, in every uyezd, in every volost and in every village; protest against those who withdrew from the congress; *publish the names* of the peasant deputies to the Constituent Assembly from your localities who have *not* accepted the decisions of these congresses, and *demand the resignation* of these deputies from the Constituent Assembly; for it is only by deceiving the people that they can pretend to have been elected by them.

Peasant comrades, the Constituent Assembly must express the will of the people. Those who quitted the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, who thwarted its will, who caused a split among the peasants and who deserted the peasants for the rich, are not the representatives of the people. They are traitors, and there is no place for them in the Constituent Assembly. They do not bring peace or land to the working people, they bring the people the senseless and criminal rebellion of the rich against Soviet power. The people will not tolerate fraud. The people will not allow their will to be thwarted. The people will not hand Soviet power over to the rich. The people will not allow the rich to ruin the cause of *peace* they uphold, or disrupt the transfer of the *land* to the working people, immediately, without exception and without compensation.

The country is faced with only this alternative:

Either a civil war of the Kaledinites, the Cadets, the Kornilovites (and their concealed allies, the followers of Avksentyev, Chernov and Maslov) against Soviet power, a bloody war, a hopeless war for its initiators, a war that will not deprive the Soviets of power but will only result in greater bitterness, greater sacrifice, greater bloodshed, greater delay in carrying through the great socialist reforms, and greater famine in the gubernias where there is no grain, or—

the honest recognition of the obvious truth that the opponents of the decisions of the Second All-Russia Congress of

Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies could have got the peasants to elect them to the Constituent Assembly only by fraud, and that there must be *new elections* for such deputies.

There is no third path. Either the bloody extermination to the rich, the followers of Avksentyev, Chernov and Maslov, or their consent to new elections of peasants' deputies of the Constituent Assembly as soon as the opponents of the decisions of the two Soviet congresses, the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, come out in the name of the peasants in the Constituent Assembly.

It is for you to say, peasant comrades!

It is for you to decide!

The resolute word of *all* peasants, *the peasant mandates from all the localities*, can bring peace to the whole country, to all the nationalities of Russia, can stop the civil war, can guarantee a true and genuine and not a sham Constituent Assembly, can expedite and facilitate the termination of the war by a just peace and accelerate the transfer of the land to the working people, can strengthen the alliance between the peasants and the workers and hasten the triumph of socialism.

It is for you to decide, peasant comrades! Long live the transfer of the land to the working people! Long live peace! Long live socialism!

The Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies

Written December 6-7 (19-20), 1917

First published in 1925 in *Lenin Miscellany IV*

Published according to the manuscript

NOTE TO F. E. DZERZHINSKY WITH A DRAFT OF A DECREE ON FIGHTING COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES AND SABOTEURS[142]

To Comrade Dzerzhinsky,

Further to your report today on measures for fighting saboteurs and counter-revolutionaries,

would it not be possible to submit a decree *like the following*?

On Fighting Counter-Revolutionaries and Saboteurs

The bourgeoisie, the landowners and all the rich classes are making desperate efforts to undermine the revolution, the aim of which is to safeguard the interests of the workers, the working and exploited masses.

The bourgeoisie are prepared to commit the most heinous crimes; they are bribing the outcast and degraded elements of society and plying them with drink to use them in riots. The supporters of the bourgeoisie, particularly among the higher clerical staff, bank officials, and so on, are sabotaging their work, and are organising strikes to thwart the government's measures for the realisation of socialist reforms. They have even gone so far as to sabotage food distribution, thereby menacing millions of people with famine.

Urgent measures are necessary to fight the counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs. In virtue of this, the Council of People's Commissars decrees:

(1) Persons belonging to the wealthy classes (i.e., with incomes of 500 rubles or more per month, and owners of urban real estate, stocks and shares, or money amounting

to over 1,000 rubles), and also all employees of banks, joint-stock companies, state and public institutions, shall within three days* present to their house committees written statements in three copies over their own signatures, and indicating their address, income, place of employment and their occupation.

(2) The house committees shall countersign these statements, retain one copy and send one copy to the municipality and another to the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (address:....**).

(3) Persons guilty of contravening the present law (failing to submit statements, giving false information, etc.) and members of house committees infringing the regulations governing the collection, filing and presentation of these statements to the institutions mentioned above shall be liable to a fine of up to 5,000 rubles for each infringement, or to imprisonment up to one year, or shall be sent to the front, depending on the nature of the offence.

(4) Persons sabotaging the work of, or declining to work in, banks, state and public institutions, joint-stock companies, railways, etc., shall be liable to similar punishment.

(5) As a first step towards universal labour conscription, it is decreed that the persons referred to in § 1 shall be obliged, first, constantly to carry with them a copy of the above-mentioned statement certified by the house committees and by their chiefs or elected officials (factory committees, food committees, railway committees, employees' trade unions, etc.); the certificates must indicate what public service or work is being performed by the individual in question, or whether he is living with his family as a disabled member thereof, etc.

(6) Secondly, such persons shall be obliged to acquire, within one week from the promulgation of the present law, worker-consumer books (specimen attached), in which their weekly income and expenditures shall be entered, together with the public duties performed by the individual in

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* In the manuscript Lenin wrote "within 24 hours" above the words "within three days".—*Ed.*

** In the manuscript Lenin left a space for the address.—*Ed.*

question, certified by the proper committees or institutions.

(7) Persons who do not come under §1 shall present to their house committees a statement in one copy of their income and place of employment and shall carry another copy of this statement certified by the house committee.

Written on December 7 (20), 1917

First published in 1924 in the journal *Krasny Arkhiv*, No. 5

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH AT A MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) DECEMBER 11 (24), 1917[143]

MINUTES

Comrade Lenin proposes (1) to dismiss the bureau of the Constituent Assembly group; (2) to explain our attitude towards the Constituent Assembly to the group in the form of theses; (3) to draw up an address to the group in which it should be mentioned that the Party Rules prescribe the subordination of all representative institutions to the Central Committee; (4) to appoint a member of the Central Committee to lead the group; (5) to draw up rules for the group.

First published in 1929 in *Minutes of the C.C. R.S.D.L.P., August 1917-February 1918*

Published according to a handwritten copy of the minutes

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE PROVISIONAL BUREAU OF THE BOLSHEVIK GROUP IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

In view of the fact that the Provisional Bureau of the Social-Democratic group of Bolsheviks in the Constituent Assembly has taken no action in respect of its chief task, that of working out a principled resolution on our Party's attitude to the Constituent Assembly; and

that the numerous individual statements, proposals and votes have shown that the majority of (or all?) the members of the Provisional Bureau hold views that are absolutely un-Social-Democratic and reveal a bourgeois-democratic attitude to the Constituent Assembly ignoring the real conditions of the class struggle and civil war,

the group resolves that the Provisional Bureau shall be dissolved and a new one elected.

Written on December 11 or 12 (24 or 25), 1917
Published for the first time

Published according to the manuscript

THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

1. The demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly was a perfectly legitimate part of the programme of revolutionary Social-Democracy, because in a bourgeois republic the Constituent Assembly represents the highest form of democracy and because, in setting up a Pre-parliament, the imperialist republic headed by Kerensky was preparing to rig the elections and violate democracy in a number of ways.

2. While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has ever since the beginning of the Revolution of 1917 repeatedly emphasised that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

3. For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist system, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Republic of Soviets (of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies) is not only a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the usual bourgeois republic crowned by a Constituent Assembly), but is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition to socialism.

4. The convocation of the Constituent Assembly in our revolution on the basis of lists submitted in the middle of October 1917 is taking place under conditions which preclude the possibility of the elections to this Constituent Assembly faithfully expressing the will of the people in general and of the working people in particular.

5. Firstly, proportional representation results in a faithful expression of the will of the people only when the party

lists correspond to the real division of the people according to the party groupings reflected in those lists. In our case, however, as is well known, the party which from May to October had the largest number of followers among the people, and especially among the peasants—the Socialist-Revolutionary Party—came out with united election lists for the Constituent Assembly in the middle of October 1917, but split in November 1917, after the elections and before the Assembly met.

For this reason, there is not, nor can there be, even a formal correspondence between the will of the mass of the electors and the composition of the elected Constituent Assembly.

6. Secondly, a still more important, not a formal nor legal, but a socio-economic, class source of the discrepancy between the will of the people, and especially the will of the working classes, on the one hand, and the composition of the Constituent Assembly, on the other, is due to the elections to the Constituent Assembly having taken place at a time when the overwhelming majority of the people could not yet know the full scope and significance of the October, Soviet, proletarian-peasant revolution, which began on October 25, 1917, i.e., after the lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly had been submitted.

7. The October Revolution is passing through successive stages of development before our very eyes, winning power for the Soviets and wresting political rule from the bourgeoisie and transferring it to the proletariat and poor peasantry.

8. It began with the victory of October 24-25 in the capital, when the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the vanguard of the proletarians and of the most politically active section of the peasants, gave a majority to the Bolshevik Party and put it in power.

9. Then, in the course of November and December, the revolution spread to the entire army and peasants, this being expressed first of all in the deposition of the old leading bodies (army committees, gubernia peasant committees, the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, etc.)—which expressed the superseded, compromising phase of the revolution, its

bourgeois, and not proletarian, phase, and which were therefore inevitably bound to disappear under the pressure of the deeper and broader masses of the people—and in the election of new leading bodies in their place.

10. This mighty movement of the exploited people for the reconstruction of the leading bodies of their organisations has not ended even now, in the middle of December 1917, and the Railwaymen's Congress, which is still in session, represents one of its stages.

11. Consequently, the grouping of the class forces in Russia in the course of their class struggle is in fact assuming, in November and December 1917, a form differing in principle from the one that the party lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly compiled in the middle of October 1917 could have reflected.

12. Recent events in the Ukraine (partly also in Finland and Byelorussia, as well as in the Caucasus) point similarly to a regrouping of class forces which is taking place in the process of the struggle between the bourgeois nationalism of the Ukrainian Rada, the Finnish Diet, etc., on the one hand, and Soviet power, the proletarian-peasant revolution in each of these national republics, on the other.

13. Lastly, the civil war which was started by the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolutionary revolt against the Soviet authorities, against the workers' and peasants' government, has finally brought the class struggle to a head and has destroyed every chance of setting in a formally democratic way the very acute problems with which history has confronted the peoples of Russia, and in the first place her working class and peasants.

14. Only the complete victory of the workers and peasants over the bourgeois and landowner revolt (as expressed in the Cadet-Kaledin movement), only the ruthless military suppression of this revolt of the slave-owners can really safeguard the proletarian-peasant revolution. The course of events and the development of the class struggle in the revolution have resulted in the slogan "All Power to the Constituent Assembly!"—which disregards the gains of the workers' and peasants' revolution, which disregards Soviet power, which disregards the decisions of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Depu-

ties, of the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, etc.—*becoming in fact* the slogan of the Cadets and the Kaledinites and of their helpers. The entire people are now fully aware that the Constituent Assembly, if it parted ways with Soviet power, would inevitably be doomed to political extinction.

15. One of the particularly acute problems of national life is the problem of peace. A really revolutionary struggle for peace began in Russia only after the victory of the October 25 Revolution, and the first fruits of this victory were the publication of the secret treaties, the conclusion of an armistice, and the beginning of open negotiations for a general peace without annexations and indemnities.

Only now are the broad sections of the people actually receiving a chance fully and openly to observe the policy of revolutionary struggle for peace and to study its results.

At the time of the elections to the Constituent Assembly the mass of the people had no such chance.

It is clear that the discrepancy between the composition of the elected Constituent Assembly and the actual will of the people on the question of terminating the war is inevitable from this point of view too.

16. The result of all the above-mentioned circumstances taken together is that the Constituent Assembly, summoned on the basis of the election lists of the parties existing prior to the proletarian-peasant revolution under the rule of the bourgeoisie, must inevitably clash with the will and interests of the working and exploited classes which on October 25 began the socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie. Naturally, the interests of this revolution stand higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly, even if those formal rights were not undermined by the absence in the law on the Constituent Assembly of a provision recognising the right of the people to recall their deputies and hold new elections at any moment.

17. Every direct or indirect attempt to consider the question of the Constituent Assembly from a formal, legal point of view, within the framework of ordinary bourgeois democracy and disregarding the class struggle and civil war, would be a betrayal of the proletariat's cause, and the adoption of the bourgeois standpoint. The revolutionary

Social-Democrats are duty bound to warn all and sundry against this error, into which a few Bolshevik leaders, who have been unable to appreciate the significance of the October uprising and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, have strayed.

18. The only chance of securing a painless solution to the crisis which has arisen owing to the divergence between the elections to the Constituent Assembly, on the one hand, and the will of the people and the interests of the working and exploited classes, on the other, is for the people to exercise as broadly and as rapidly as possible the right to elect the members of the Constituent Assembly anew, and for the Constituent Assembly to accept the law of the Central Executive Committee on these new elections, to proclaim that it unreservedly recognises Soviet power, the Soviet revolution, and its policy on the questions of peace, the land and workers' control, and to resolutely join the camp of the enemies of the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolution.

19. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, the crisis in connection with the Constituent Assembly can be settled only in a revolutionary way, by Soviet power adopting the most energetic, speedy, firm and determined revolutionary measures against the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolution, no matter behind what slogans and institutions (even participation in the Constituent Assembly) this counter-revolution may hide. Any attempt to tie the hands of Soviet power in this struggle would be tantamount to aiding counter-revolution.

Written on December 11 or 12 (24 or 25), 1917

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Published according to the manuscript verified with a typewritten copy bearing Lenin's corrections

SPEECH AT THE EXTRAORDINARY ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF RAILWAYMEN DECEMBER 13 (26), 1917[144]

Allow me to greet the Congress on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars and to express the hope that the organisation of the railwaymen will be conducted on the same lines as the vast majority of workers and peasants in Russia. There is no doubt at all that the October Revolution, carried out by the workers, peasants and soldiers, is a socialist one. It is opposed by all the forces of the bourgeoisie and the top salaried sections, who have grown accustomed to the old order and cannot understand that the revolution is going to remake the old system from top to bottom. Listen to their loud cries that Soviet power is repudiated by the majority in Russia. You know the worth of all this clamour. There is a flood of telegrams saying that troops are moving on Petrograd, against the gains of the October Revolution. We throw them into the waste-paper basket, being fully aware that we shall not have to wait long for a refutation. The top-drawer organisations of the First Peasant Congress, as represented by the Avksentyevs, said on behalf of the peasant mass that they were opposed to the rule of tyrants and usurpers. What we said was: "Let them curse, we shall see what the peasants have to say when we start confiscating the landed estates and giving them to the peasants." As you see, the Second Peasant Congress has brought victory to Soviet power. We have established close contacts with the Second Soviet of Peasants' Deputies. It is with them that we have organised the Soviet power of workers, soldiers and peasants. We shall surely find the same attitude among the mass of railwaymen. You are aware that disruption of railway communications—aggravated by sabotage on the part

of senior officials—is telling on the country. You are aware that a breakdown of railway communications makes impossible any balanced exchange between town and country, which is so vital to normal food supplies. Comrades, we need your help to get the railways going. Only by joining efforts with you can we overcome the disorder and strengthen the power of the workers, soldiers and peasants. Soviet power has no other support than that of the broad working masses. We are sure that the present Railwaymen's Congress will consolidate the power of the People's Commissars by setting up an organisation that will help us in the struggle for land and peace. In conclusion, comrades, I extend to you once again our greetings and best wishes of fruitful work. (*As Comrade Lenin leaves the hall, almost the entire audience joins in a burst of applause. To general applause, the Congress elects him honorary chairman.*)

Pravda No. 214,
December 27 (14), 1917
and *Izvestia* No. 251,
December 14, 1917

Published according
to the *Izvestia* text

FOR BREAD AND PEACE[145]

Two questions now take precedence over all other political questions—the question of bread and the question of peace. The imperialist war, the war between the biggest and richest banking firms, Britain and Germany, that is being waged for world domination, the division of the spoils, for the plunder of small and weak nations; this horrible, criminal war has ruined all countries, exhausted all peoples, and confronted mankind with the alternative—either sacrifice all civilisation and perish or throw off the capitalist yoke in the revolutionary way, do away with the rule of the bourgeoisie and win socialism and durable peace.

If socialism is not victorious, peace between the capitalist states will be only a truce, an interlude, a time of preparation for a fresh slaughter of the peoples. Peace and bread are the basic demands of the workers and the exploited. The war has made these demands extremely urgent. The war has brought hunger to the most civilised countries, to those most culturally developed. On the other hand, the war, as a tremendous historical process, has accelerated social development to an unheard-of degree. Capitalism had developed into imperialism, i.e., into monopoly capitalism, and under the influence of the war it has become state monopoly capitalism. We have now reached the stage of world economy that is the immediate stepping stone to socialism.

The socialist revolution that has begun in Russia is, therefore, only the beginning of the world socialist revolution. Peace and bread, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, revo-

lutionary means for the healing of war wounds, the complete victory of socialism—such are the aims of the struggle.

Petrograd, December 14, 1917.

Written in Russian
on December 14 (27), 1917
Signed: *Lenin*

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Signed: *W. Lenin*

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SPEECH ON THE NATIONALISATION OF THE BANKS DELIVERED AT A MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECEMBER 14 (27), 1917[146]

MINUTES

The last speaker tried to intimidate us by asserting that we are heading towards an abyss, towards certain destruction. There is, however, nothing new for us in this intimidation. *Novaya Zhizn*, the newspaper that expresses the views of the group to which the speaker belongs, said before the October days that our revolution would bring nothing but disorders and anarchic riots. Talk about our travelling the wrong road is, therefore, a reflection of bourgeois psychology that even disinterested people cannot get rid of. (*Voice from among the internationalists*: "Demagogy!") No, that is not demagogy, it is your constant talk of the axe that is real demagogy.

The measures proposed in the decree are only an effective way of ensuring control.

You speak of the intricacy of the machinery, of its fragility and of the involved nature of the problem—these are elementary truths that everybody is aware of. But if these truths are merely used to put a brake on all socialist undertakings, we say that anyone who takes that line is a demagogue, and a dangerous demagogue at that.

We want to begin an inventory of the vaults, but the learned specialists tell us there is nothing in them but documents and securities. Then what is there bad about representatives of the people checking them?

If what they say is true, why do those same learned specialists who criticise us not come out with it openly? Whenever

the Council makes decisions they declare that they agree with us, but only in principle. This is the way of the bourgeois intelligentsia, of all conciliators, who ruin everything with their constant agreement in principle and disagreement in practice.

If you know so much about all these things and have the experience, why don't you help us, why do we meet with nothing but sabotage from you in our difficult task?

You proceed from a correct scientific theory, but for us theory forms the basis of actions to be undertaken, it gives us confidence in those actions and does not scare the life out of us. Of course it is difficult to make a beginning and we often come up against fragile things; nevertheless we have coped with them, are coping with them and shall continue to cope with them.

If book-learning were to serve no other purpose than that of hampering every new step and instilling eternal fear of the new, it would be useless.

Nobody, with the exception of the utopian socialists, has ever asserted that victory is possible without resistance, without the dictatorship of the proletariat and without seizing the old world in an iron grip.

You accepted this dictatorship in principle, but when that word is translated into Russian, called an "iron grip" and applied in practice, you warn us of the fragility and involved nature of the matter.

You stubbornly refuse to see that the iron hand that destroys also creates. It is an undoubted advantage to us to go over from principles to deeds.

To effect control we have called upon the bankers and together with them have elaborated measures that they agreed to, so that loans could be obtained under full control and properly accounted for. But there are people among the bank employees who have the interests of the people at heart and who have told us: "They are deceiving you, make haste and check their criminal activity that is directly harmful to you." And we did make haste.

We realise that this is an involved measure. None of us, even those who are trained economists, will undertake to carry it out. We shall invite the specialists who are engaged in that work, but only when we have the keys in our own

hands. Then we shall even be able to draw advisers from the former millionaires. We invite anybody who wants to work as long as he does not try to reduce every revolutionary enterprise to mere words; that is something we shall not stand for. We use the words "dictatorship of the proletariat" in all seriousness and we shall effect that dictatorship.

We wanted to take the line of agreement with the banks, we gave them loans to finance factories, but they carried out sabotage on an unprecedented scale, and practical experience has forced us to adopt other measures of control.

A comrade from the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries has said that in principle they would vote for the immediate nationalisation of the banks and afterwards work out practical measures in the shortest possible time. But he was wrong in that, because our draft does not contain anything but principles. The Supreme Economic Council is waiting to discuss them, but if the decree is not approved the banks will immediately do everything to further disrupt the economy.

The adoption of the decree is urgent, otherwise opposition and sabotage will ruin us. (*Stormy applause.*)

Pravda No. 216,
December 29 (16), 1917
and *Izvestia* No. 253,
December 16, 1917

Published according to *Minutes of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies, Second Convocation*, Moscow, 1918

DRAFT DECREE ON THE NATIONALISATION OF THE BANKS AND ON MEASURES NECESSARY FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION[147]

The critical food situation and the threat of famine caused by the profiteering and sabotage of the capitalists and officials, as well as by the general economic ruin, make it imperative to adopt extraordinary revolutionary measures to combat this evil.

To enable all citizens of the state, and in the first place all the working classes to undertake this struggle under the leadership of their Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, and normalise the country's economic life immediately and comprehensively, stopping at nothing and acting in the most revolutionary manner, the following regulations are decreed:

DRAFT DECREE ON THE NATIONALISATION OF THE BANKS AND ON MEASURES NECESSARY FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION

1. All joint-stock companies are proclaimed the property of the state.

2. Members of boards and directors of joint-stock companies, as well as all shareholders belonging to the wealthy classes (i.e., possessing property to the value of over 5,000 rubles or an income exceeding 500 rubles per month), shall be obliged to continue to conduct the affairs of these enterprises in good order, observing the law on workers' control,

presenting all shares to the State Bank and submitting to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies weekly reports on their activities.

3. State loans, foreign and domestic, are annulled (abrogated) .

4. The interests of small holders of bonds and all kinds of shares, i.e., holders belonging to the working classes of the population, shall be fully guaranteed.

5. Universal labour conscription is introduced. All citizens of both sexes between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five shall be obliged to perform work assigned to them by the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, or by other bodies of Soviet power.

6. As a first step towards the introduction of universal labour conscription, it is decreed that members of the wealthy classes (see § 2) shall be obliged to keep, and have entries properly made in, consumer-worker books, or worker budget books, which must be presented to the appropriate workers' organisations or to the local Soviets and their bodies for weekly recording of the performance of work undertaken by each.

7. For the purpose of proper accounting and distribution of food and other necessities, every citizen of the state shall be obliged to join a consumers' society. The food boards, committees of supplies and other similar organisations, as well as the railway and transport unions, shall, under the direction of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, establish supervision to ensure the observance of the present law. Members of the wealthy classes, in particular, shall be obliged to perform the work to be assigned to them by the Soviets in the sphere of organising and conducting the affairs of the consumers' societies.

8. The railway workers' and employees' unions shall be obliged urgently to draw up and immediately begin to carry into effect emergency measures for the better organisation of transport, particularly as regards the' delivery of food, fuel and other prime necessities, and shall be guided in the first place by the instructions and orders of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies and then of the bodies authorised by the latter, and of the Supreme Economic Council.

Similarly, the railway unions, working in conjunction with the local Soviets, shall be responsible for most vigorously combating speculation in food and mercilessly suppressing all profiteering, not hesitating to adopt revolutionary measures.

9. Workers' organisations, unions of office employees and local Soviets shall be obliged immediately to set about switching enterprises which are closing down or are to be demobilised, and also unemployed workers to useful work and the production of necessities, and to search for orders, raw materials and fuel. While under no circumstances postponing either this work or the beginning of the exchange of farm produce for industrial goods pending receipt of special instructions from higher bodies, the local unions and Soviets shall be strictly guided by the orders and instructions of the Supreme Economic Council.

10. Members of the wealthy classes shall be obliged to keep all their monetary possessions in the State Bank and its branches, or in the savings-banks, and shall be entitled to withdraw not more than 100-125 rubles a week (as shall be established by the local Soviets) for living expenses; withdrawals for the needs of production and trade shall be made only on presentation of written certificates of the organs of workers' control.

To supervise the due observance of the present law, regulations will be introduced providing for the exchange of existing currency notes for new currency notes. All the property of persons guilty of deceiving the state and the people shall be confiscated.

11. All offenders against the present law, saboteurs and government officials who go on strike, as well as profiteers, shall be liable to a similar penalty, and also to imprisonment, dispatch to the front, or hard labour. The local Soviets and bodies under their jurisdiction shall urgently decide upon the most revolutionary measures to combat these real enemies of the people.

12. The trade unions and other organisations of the working people, in conjunction with the local Soviets, and with the collaboration of the most reliable persons recommended by Party and other organisations, shall form mobile groups of inspectors to supervise the implementation of the

present law, to verify the quantity and quality of work performed and to bring to trial before the revolutionary courts persons guilty of violating or evading the law.

The workers and office employees of the nationalised enterprises must exert every effort and adopt extraordinary measures to improve the organisation of the work, strengthen discipline and raise the productivity of labour. The organs of workers' control are to present to the Supreme Economic Council weekly reports on the results achieved in this respect. Those found guilty of shortcomings and neglect are to be brought before revolutionary courts.

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December 14 (27), 1917

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to the manuscript

QUESTIONS TO DELEGATES TO THE ARMY CONGRESS ON THE DEMOBILISATION OF THE ARMY[148]

(1) Is the likelihood of the Germans starting an offensive in the near future great or small—

(a) from the viewpoint of the physical and technical possibility of a winter offensive;

(b) from the viewpoint of the mood of the mass of the German soldiers; is that mood capable of preventing an offensive, or at least of retarding it?

(2) Can it be assumed that the Germans, if we immediately break off peace negotiations, and if their troops immediately take the offensive, are capable of inflicting a decisive defeat upon us? Will they be able to take Petrograd?

(3) Is it to be feared that the news of the peace negotiations having been broken off will result in widespread anarchist sentiments in the army and in desertions from the front, or may we be confident that the army will staunchly hold the front even after the receipt of such news?

(4) Would our army be capable, from the military viewpoint, of resisting a German offensive, if it began on January 1? If not, when would our army be in a position to resist a German offensive?

(5) In the event of a swift German advance, could our army retire in good order and preserve its artillery, and if 50. could the Germans' advance into the heart of Russia be held up for long?

(6) General conclusion: from the point of view of the state of the army, should we strive to drag out the peace negotiations? or would it be preferable to break them off immediately in revolutionary fashion, because of the Germans'

annexationist policy and as a decisive and firm step which would prepare the ground for a possible revolutionary war?

(7) Should we at once undertake intensive agitation against the Germans' annexationist policy and for a revolutionary war?

(8) Would it be possible at very short notice (5-10 days, say) to arrange a canvass of fairly wide sections of the army at the front with a view to obtaining fuller replies to the above questions in more suitable form?

(9) Is it to be hoped that the dissensions with the Ukrainians will weaken, or even yield place to a firm consolidation of forces when they hear of the Germans' annexationist demands, or it may be expected that the Ukrainians will take advantage of the Great Russians' greater difficulties to step up the struggle against them?

(10) If the army could vote would it be in favour of immediate peace on annexationist (loss of the occupied regions) and economically very harsh terms for Russia, or would it favour the maximum effort for a revolutionary war, i.e., resistance to the Germans?

Written on December 17 (30), 1917

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Published according to the *Transactions*

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS[149]

1. Intensified agitation against the annexationist policy of the Germans.
2. Allocation of additional funds for this agitation.
3. Transfer of peace negotiations to Stockholm.
4. Continuation of peace negotiations and resistance to their speed-up by the Germans.
5. Greater efforts to reorganise the army, reducing its strength and enhancing its defence potential.
6. Urgent measures for defence in the event of a breakthrough to Petrograd.
7. Propaganda and agitation on the necessity for a revolutionary war.

Written on December 18 (31), 1917

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according to the manuscript

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE RADA

Having heard the report of Comrade Proshyan, who, as a delegate to the Peasants Congress, had a talk with Vinnichenko, Grushevsky, Porsh and others, in their capacity of official representatives of the Rada;

and considering that these official representatives of the Rada have expressed their readiness in principle to negotiate an agreement with the Council of People's Commissars on the basis of recognition by the Council of People's Commissars of the independence of the people's Ukrainian republic, and the Rada's recognition of the counter-revolutionary nature of Kaledin and his accomplices;

considering further that the Council of People's Commissars has always unconditionally recognised the right of every nation, including the Ukrainian, to exist as an independent state;

that any attempt to avoid war with the Rada, provided the Rada recognised Kaledin's counter-revolutionary nature and did not hamper the war against him, was undoubtedly desirable;

expressing its conviction that only the Soviets of the Ukrainian poor peasants, workers and soldiers could set up a power in the Ukraine under which clashes between fraternal peoples would be impossible,

the Council of People's Commissars, deeming it appropriate at the same time to open effective negotiations with the Rada with the aim of stopping the clashes caused by the Rada's policy in respect of the common front and Kaledin's counter-revolutionary revolt, resolves:

to invite the Rada to negotiate an agreement on the above-mentioned principles and to designate the town of Smolensk or Vitebsk as being probably the most convenient place for the negotiation.

Written on December 19, 1917
(January 1, 1918)

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to the manuscript

FEAR OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE OLD AND THE FIGHT FOR THE NEW

The capitalists and their supporters, witting and unwitting, are thinking, saying and writing: "The Bolsheviks have now been in power for two months, but instead of a socialist paradise we find the hell of chaos, civil war and even greater dislocation."

We reply: the Bolsheviks have been in power for only two months, but a tremendous step towards socialism has already been made. This is not evident only to those who do not wish to see or are unable to analyse the chain of historical events. They refuse to see that in a matter of weeks the undemocratic institutions in the army, the countryside and industry have been almost completely destroyed. There is no other way—there can be no other way—to socialism save through such destruction. They refuse to see that in a few weeks, the lying imperialist foreign policy, which dragged out the war and covered up plunder and seizure through secret treaties, has been replaced by a truly revolutionary-democratic policy working for a really democratic peace, a policy which has already produced such a great practical success as the armistice and has increased the propaganda power of our revolution a hundredfold. They refuse to see that workers' control and the nationalisation of the banks are being put into practice, and these are the first steps towards socialism.

Those tyrannised by capitalist routine, shocked by the thundering crash of the old world, and the blast, rumble, and "chaos" (apparent chaos) as the age-old structures of tsarism and the bourgeoisie break up and cave in cannot see the historical prospects; nor can those who are scared by the

class struggle at its highest pitch when it turns into civil war, the only war that is legitimate, just and sacred—not in the clerical but in the human sense—the sacred war of the oppressed to overthrow the oppressors and liberate the working people from all oppression. Actually all these tyrannised, shocked and scared bourgeois, petty bourgeois and "those in the service of the bourgeoisie" are frequently guided, without realising it, by that old, absurd, sentimental and vulgar intellectualist idea of "introducing socialism", which they have acquired from hearsay and scraps of socialist theory, repeating the distortions of this theory produced by ignoramuses and half-scholars, and attributing to us Marxists the idea, and even the plan, to "introduce" socialism.

To us Marxists these notions, to say nothing of the plans, are alien. We have always known, said and emphasised that socialism cannot be "introduced", that it takes shape in the course of the most intense, the most acute class struggle—which reaches heights of frenzy and desperation and civil war; we have always said that a long period of "birth-pangs" lies between capitalism and socialism; that violence is always the midwife of the old society; that a special state (that is, a special system of organised coercion of a definite class) corresponds to the transitional period between the bourgeois and the socialist society, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat. What dictatorship implies and means is a state of simmering war, a state of military measures of struggle against the enemies of the proletarian power. The Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat, and Marx and Engels reproached it for what they considered to be one of the causes of its downfall, namely, that the Commune had not used its armed force with *sufficient* vigour to suppress the resistance of the exploiters.[150]

These intellectualist howls about the suppression of capitalist resistance are actually nothing but an echo of the old "conciliation", to put it in a "genteel" manner. Putting it with proletarian bluntness, this means: continued kowtowing to the money-bags is what lies behind the howls against the present working-class coercion now being applied (unfortunately, with insufficient pressure or vigour) against the bourgeoisie, the saboteurs and counter-revolutionaries. The kind Peshekhonov, one of the conciliating ministers,

proclaimed in June 1917: "The resistance of the capitalists has been broken." This kind soul had no inkling of the fact that their resistance must really be *broken*, and it *will* be broken, and that the scientific name for this breaking-up operation is dictatorship of the proletariat; that an entire historical period is marked by the suppression of capitalist resistance, and, consequently, by systematic application of *coercion* to an entire class (the bourgeoisie) and its accomplices.

The grasping, malicious, frenzied filthy avidity of the money-bags, the cowed servility of their hangers-on is the true social source of the present wail raised by the spineless intellectuals—from those of *Rech* to those of *Novaya Zhizn*—against violence on the part of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasants. Such is the objective meaning of their howls, their pathetic speeches, their clownish cries of "freedom" (freedom for the capitalists to oppress the people), etc. They would be "prepared" to recognise socialism, if mankind could jump straight into it in one spectacular leap, without any of the friction, the struggles, the exploiters' gnashing of teeth, or their diverse attempts to preserve the old order, or smuggle it back through the window, without the revolutionary proletariat responding to each attempt in a violent manner. These spineless hangers-on of the bourgeoisie with intellectualist pretensions are quite "prepared" to wade into the water provided they do not get their feet wet.

The drooping intellectuals are terrified when the bourgeoisie and the civil servants, employees, doctors, engineers, etc., who have grown accustomed to serving the bourgeoisie, go to extremes in their resistance. They tremble and utter even shriller cries about the need for a return to "conciliation". Like all true friends of the oppressed class, we can only derive satisfaction from the exploiters' extreme measures of resistance, because we do not expect the proletariat to mature for power in an atmosphere of cajoling and persuasion, in a school of mealy sermons or didactic declamations, but in the school of life and struggle. To become the ruling class and defeat the bourgeoisie for good the proletariat must be *schooled*, because the skill this implies does not come ready-made. The proletariat must do its learning in the struggle, and stubborn, desperate struggle in

FOR MARXISTS INTERNET ARCHIVE NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

earnest is the only real teacher. The greater the extremes of the exploiters' resistance, the more vigorously, firmly, ruthlessly and successfully will they be suppressed by the exploited. The more varied the exploiters' attempts to uphold the old, the sooner will the proletariat learn to ferret out its enemies from their last nook and corner, to pull up the roots of their domination, and cut the very ground which could (and had to) breed wage-slavery, mass poverty and the profiteering and effrontery of the money-bags.

The strength of the proletariat and the peasantry allied to it grows with the resistance of the bourgeoisie and its retainers. As their enemies, the exploiters, step up their resistance, the exploited mature and gain in strength; they grow and learn and they cast out the "old Adam" of wage-slavery. Victory will be on the side of the exploited, for on their side is life, numerical strength, the strength of the mass, the strength of the inexhaustible sources of all that is selfless, dedicated and honest, all that is surging forward and awakening to the building of the new, all the vast reserves of energy and talent latent in the so-called "common people", the workers and peasants. Victory will be theirs.

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Signed: *Lenin*

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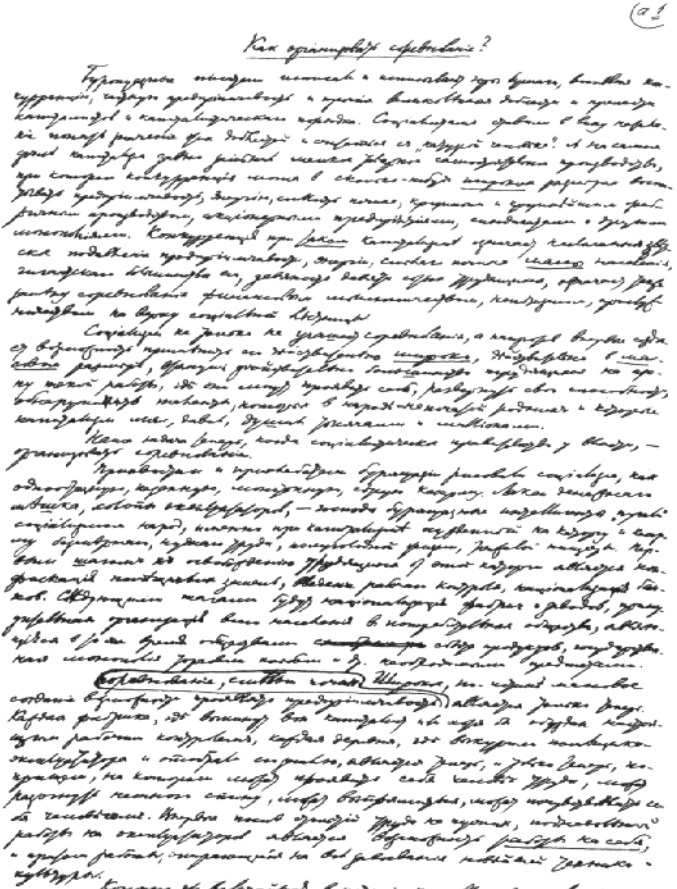
HOW TO ORGANISE COMPETITION?

Bourgeois authors have been using up reams of paper praising competition, private enterprise, and all the other magnificent virtues and blessings of the capitalists and the capitalist system. Socialists have been accused of refusing to understand the importance of these virtues, and of ignoring "human nature". As a matter of fact, however, capitalism long ago replaced small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy and bold initiative to any *considerable* extent, by large- and very large-scale factory production, joint-stock companies, syndicates and other monopolies. Under such capitalism, competition means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy and bold initiative of the *mass* of the population, of its overwhelming majority, of ninety-nine out of every hundred toilers; it also means that competition is replaced by financial fraud, nepotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder.

Far from extinguishing competition, socialism, on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for actually drawing the majority of working people into a field of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop the capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people whom capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.

Now that a socialist government is in power our task is to organise competition.

The hangers-on and spongers on the bourgeoisie described socialism as a uniform, routine, monotonous and drab barrack system. The lackeys of the money-bags, the lickspittles



First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "How to Organize Competition?". December 1917

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First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "How to Organize Competition?". December 1917

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of the exploiters, the bourgeois intellectual gentlemen used socialism as a bogey to "frighten" the people, who, under capitalism, were doomed to the penal servitude and the barrack-like discipline of arduous, monotonous toil, to a life of dire poverty and semi-starvation. The first step towards the emancipation of the people from this penal servitude is the confiscation of the landed estates, the introduction of workers' control and the nationalisation of the banks. The next steps will be the nationalisation of the factories, the compulsory organisation of the whole population in consumers' societies, which are at the same time societies for the sale of products, and the state monopoly of the trade in grain and other necessities.

Only now is the opportunity created for the truly mass display of enterprise, competition and bold initiative. Every factory from which the capitalist has been ejected, or in which he has at least been curbed by genuine workers' control, every village from which the landowning exploiter has been smoked out and his land confiscated has only now become a field in which the working man can reveal his talents, unbend his back a little, rise to his full height, and feel that he is a human being. For the first time after centuries of working for others, of forced labour for the exploiter, it has become possible to *work for oneself* and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technology and culture in one's work.

Of course, this greatest change in human history from working under compulsion to working for oneself cannot take place without friction, difficulties, conflicts and violence against the inveterate parasites and their hangers-on. No worker has any illusions on that score. The workers and poor peasants, hardened by dire want and by many long years of slave labour for the exploiters, by their countless insults and acts of violence, realise that it will take time to *break* the resistance of those exploiters. The workers and peasants are not in the least infected with the sentimental illusions of the intellectual gentlemen, of the *Novaya Zhizn* crowd and other slush, who "shouted" themselves hoarse "denouncing" the capitalists and "gesticulated" against them, only to burst into tears and to behave like whipped puppies when it came to *deeds*, to putting threats into action,

to carrying out in practice the work of *removing* the capitalists.

The great change from working under compulsion to working for oneself, to labour planned and organised on a gigantic, national (and to a certain extent international, world) scale, also requires—in addition to "*military*" measures for the suppression of the exploiters' resistance—tremendous *organisational*, organising effort on the part of the proletariat and the poor peasants. The organisational task is interwoven to form a single whole with the task of ruthlessly suppressing by military methods yesterday's slave-owners (capitalists) and their packs of lackeys—the bourgeois intellectual gentlemen. Yesterday's slave-owners and their "intellectual" stooges say and think, "We have always been organisers and chiefs. We have commanded, and we want to continue doing so. We shall refuse to obey the 'common people', the workers and peasants. We shall not submit to them. We shall convert knowledge into a weapon for the defence of the privileges of the money-bags and of the rule of capital over the people."

That is what the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals say, think, and do. From the point of view of *self-interest* their behaviour is comprehensible. The hangers-on and spongers on the feudal landowners, the priests, the scribes, the bureaucrats as Gogol depicted them, and the "intellectuals" who hated Belinsky,[151] also found it "hard" to part with serfdom. But the cause of the exploiters and of their "intellectual" menials is hopeless. The workers and peasants are beginning to break down their resistance—unfortunately, not yet firmly, resolutely and ruthlessly enough—*and break down they will.*

"They" think that the "common people", the "common" workers and poor peasants, will be unable to cope with the great, truly heroic, in the world-historic sense of the word, organisational tasks which the socialist revolution has imposed upon the working people. The intellectuals who are accustomed to serving the capitalists and the capitalist state say in order to console themselves: "You cannot do without us." But their insolent assumption has no truth in it; educated men are already making their appearance on the side of the people, on the side of the working people,

and are helping to break the resistance of the servants of capital. There are a great many talented organisers among the peasants and the working class, and they are only just beginning to become aware of themselves, to awaken, to stretch out towards great, vital, creative work, to tackle with their own forces the task of building socialist society.

One of the most important tasks today, if not the most important, is to develop this independent initiative of the workers, and of all the working and exploited people generally, develop it as widely as possible in creative *organisational* work. At all costs we must break the old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called "upper classes", only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, are capable of administering the state and directing the organisational development of socialist society.

This is a prejudice fostered by rotten routine, by petrified views, slavish habits, and still more by the sordid selfishness of the capitalists, in whose interest it is to administer while plundering and to plunder while administering. The workers will not forget for a moment that they need the power of knowledge. The extraordinary striving after knowledge which the workers reveal, particularly now, shows that mistaken ideas about this do not and cannot exist among the proletariat. But every *rank-and-file* worker and peasant who can read and write, who can judge people and has practical experience, is capable of *organisational* work. Among the "common people", of whom the bourgeois intellectuals speak with such haughtiness and contempt, there are *many* such men and women. This sort of talent among the working class and the peasants is a rich and still untapped source.

The workers and peasants are still "timid", they have not yet become accustomed to the idea that *they* are now the *ruling class*; they are not yet resolute enough. The revolution could not *at one stroke* instil these qualities into millions and millions of people who all their lives had been compelled by want and hunger to work under the threat of the stick. But the Revolution of October 1917 is strong, viable and invincible because it *awakens* these qualities, breaks down the old impediments, removes the worn-out shackles, and

leads the working people on to the road of the *independent* creation of a new life.

Accounting and control—this is the *main* economic task of every Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, of every consumers' society, of every union or committee of supplies, of every factory committee or organ of workers' control in general.

We must fight against the old habit of regarding the measure of labour and the means of production, from the point of view of the slave whose sole aim is to lighten the burden of labour or to obtain at least some little bit *from the bourgeoisie*. The advanced, class-conscious workers have already started this fight, and they are offering determined resistance to the newcomers who flocked to the factory world in particularly large numbers during the war and who now would like to treat the *people's* factory, the factory that has come into the possession of the people, in the old way, with the sole aim of "snatching the biggest possible piece of the pie and clearing out". All the class-conscious, honest and thinking peasants and working people will take their place in this fight by the side of the advanced workers.

Accounting and control, *if* carried on by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the supreme state power, or on the instructions, on the authority, of *this* power—widespread, general, universal accounting and control, the accounting and control of the amount of labour performed and of the distribution of products—is the *essence* of socialist transformation, once the political rule of the proletariat has been established and secured.

The accounting and control essential for the transition to socialism can be exercised only by the people. Only the voluntary and conscientious co-operation of the *mass* of the workers and peasants in accounting and controlling *the rich*, *the rogues*, *the idlers and the rowdies*, a co-operation marked by revolutionary enthusiasm, can conquer these survivals of accursed capitalist society, these dregs of humanity, these hopelessly decayed and atrophied limbs, this contagion, this plague, this ulcer that socialism has inherited from capitalism.

Workers and peasants, working and exploited people! The land, the banks and the factories have now become the

property of the entire people! You *yourselves* must set to work to take account of and control the production and distribution of products—this, and this *alone* is the road to the victory of socialism, the only guarantee of its victory, the guarantee of victory over all exploitation, over all poverty and want! For there is enough bread, iron, timber, wool, cotton and flax in Russia to satisfy the needs of everyone, if only labour and its products are properly distributed, if only a *business-like*, *practical* control over this distribution by the entire people is established, provided only we can defeat the enemies of the people: the rich and their hangers-on, and the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies, *not only* in politics, but also in *everyday economic* life.

No mercy for these enemies of the people, the enemies of socialism, the enemies of the working people! War to the death against the rich and their hangers-on, the bourgeois intellectuals; war on the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies! All of them are of the same brood—the spawn of capitalism, the offspring of aristocratic and bourgeois society; the society in which a handful of men robbed and insulted the people; the society in which poverty and want forced thousands and thousands on to the path of rowdyism, corruption and roguery, and caused them to lose all human semblance; the society which inevitably cultivated in the working man the desire to escape exploitation even by means of deception, to wriggle out of it, to escape, if only for a moment, from loathsome labour, to procure at least a crust of bread by any possible means, at any cost, so as not to starve, so as to subdue the pangs of hunger suffered by himself and by his near ones.

The rich and the rogues are two sides of the same coin, they are the two principal categories of *parasites* which capitalism fostered; they are the principal enemies of socialism. These enemies must be placed under the special surveillance of the entire people; they must be ruthlessly punished for the slightest violation of the laws and regulations of socialist society. Any display of weakness, hesitation or sentimentality in this respect would be an immense crime against socialism.

In order to render these parasites harmless to socialist society we must organise the accounting and control of the

amount of work done and of production and distribution by the entire people, by millions and millions of workers and peasants, participating voluntarily, energetically and with revolutionary enthusiasm. And in order to organise this accounting and control, which is *fully within the ability* of every honest, intelligent and efficient worker and peasant, we must rouse their organising talent, the talent that is to be found in their midst; we must rouse among them—and organise on a national scale—*competition* in the sphere of organisational achievement; the workers and peasants must be brought to see clearly the difference between the necessary advice of an educated man and the necessary control by the "common" worker and peasant of the *slovenliness* that is so usual among the "educated".

This slovenliness, this carelessness, untidiness, unpunctuality, nervous haste, the inclination to substitute discussion for action, talk for work, the inclination to undertake everything under the sun without finishing anything, are characteristics of the "educated"; and this is not due to the fact that they are bad by nature, still less is it due to their evil will; it is due to all their habits of life, the conditions of their work, to fatigue, to the abnormal separation of mental from manual labour, and so on, and so forth.

Among the mistakes, shortcomings and defects of our revolution a by no means unimportant place is occupied by the mistakes, etc., which are due to these deplorable—but at present inevitable—characteristics of the intellectuals in our midst, and to the *lack* of sufficient supervision by the *workers* over the *organisational* work of the intellectuals.

The workers and peasants are still "timid"; they must get rid of this timidity, and they *certainly* will get rid of it. We cannot dispense with the advice, the instruction of educated people, of intellectuals and specialists. Every sensible worker and peasant understands this perfectly well, and the intellectuals in our midst cannot complain of a lack of attention and comradely respect on the part of the workers and peasants. Advice and instruction, however, is one thing, and the organisation of *practical* accounting and control is another. Very often the intellectuals give excellent advice and instruction, but they prove to be ridiculously, *absurdly*, shamefully "unhandy" and incapable of *carrying out* this

advice and instruction, of exercising *practical control* over the translation of words into deeds.

In this very respect it is utterly impossible to dispense with the help and the *leading role* of the practical organisers from among the "people", from among the factory workers and working peasants. "It is not the gods who make pots"—this is the truth that the workers and peasants should get well drilled into their minds. They must understand that the whole thing now is *practical work*; that the historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, vitalised by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice; when the words of Marx, "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes",[152] become particularly true—every step in really curbing in practice, restricting, fully registering the rich and the rogues and keeping them under control is worth more than a dozen excellent arguments about socialism. For, "theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life".[153]

Competition must be arranged between practical organisers from among the workers and peasants. Every attempt to establish stereotyped forms and to impose uniformity from above, as intellectuals are so inclined to do, must be combated. Stereotyped forms and uniformity imposed from above have nothing in common with democratic and socialist centralism. The unity of essentials, of fundamentals, of the substance, is not disturbed but ensured by *variety* in details, in specific local features, in methods of *approach*, in *methods* of exercising control, in *ways* of exterminating and rendering harmless the parasites (the rich and the rogues, slovenly and hysterical intellectuals, etc., etc.).

The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms. Our Soviets are following the same road. But they are still "timid"; they have not yet got into their stride, have not yet "bitten into" their new, great, creative task of building the socialist system. The Soviets must set to work more boldly and display greater initiative. All "communes"—factories, villages, consumers' societies, and committees of supplies—must *compete* with each other as practical organisers of accounting and control of labour and

distribution of products. The programme of this accounting and control is simple, clear and intelligible to all—everyone to have bread; everyone to have sound footwear and good clothing; everyone to have warm dwellings; everyone to work conscientiously; not a single rogue (including those who shirk their work) to be allowed to be at liberty, but kept in prison, or serve his sentence of compulsory labour of the hardest kind; not a single rich man who violates the laws and regulations of socialism to be allowed to escape the fate of the rogue, which should, in justice, be the fate of the rich man. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the *practical* commandment of socialism. This is how things should be organised *practically*. These are the *practical* successes our "communes" and our worker and peasant organisers should be proud of. And this applies particularly to the organisers among the intellectuals (*particularly*, because they are *too much*, *far too* much in the habit of being proud of their general instructions and resolutions).

Thousands of practical forms and methods of accounting and controlling the rich, the rogues and the idlers must be devised and put to a practical test by the communes themselves, by small units in town and country. Variety is a guarantee of effectiveness here, a pledge of success in achieving the single common aim—to *clean* the land of Russia of all vermin, of fleas—the rogues, of bugs—the rich, and so on and so forth. In one place half a score of rich, a dozen rogues, half a dozen workers who shirk their work (in the manner of rowdies, the manner in which many compositors in Petrograd, particularly in the Party printing-shops, shirk their work) will be put in prison. In another place they will be put to cleaning latrines. In a third place they will be provided with "yellow tickets" after they have served their time, so that everyone shall keep an eye on them, as *harmful* persons, until they reform. In a fourth place, one out of every ten idlers will be shot on the spot. In a fifth place mixed methods may be adopted, and by probational release, for example, the rich, the bourgeois intellectuals, the rogues and rowdies who are corrigible will be given an opportunity to reform quickly. The more variety there will be, the better and richer will be our general experience, the more certain and rapid will be the success of socialism, and the easier will it be for

practice to devise—for only practice can devise—the best methods and means of struggle.

In what commune, in what district of a large town, in what factory and in what village are there *no* starving people, *no* unemployed, *no* idle rich, *no* despicable lackeys of the bourgeoisie, saboteurs who call themselves intellectuals? Where has most been done to raise the productivity of labour, to build good new houses for the poor, to put the poor in the houses of the rich, to regularly provide a bottle of milk for every child of every poor family? It is on these points that *competition* should develop between the communes, communities, producer-consumers' societies and associations, and Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This is the work in which *talented organisers* should come to the fore *in practice* and be promoted to work in state administration. There is a great deal of talent among the people. It is merely suppressed. It must be given an opportunity to display itself. It *and it alone*, with the support of the people, can save Russia and save the cause of socialism.

Written December 24-27, 1917
(January 6-9, 1918)

First published in *Pravda* No. 17
January 20, 1929
Signed: *V. Lenin*

Published according
to the manuscript

DRAFT DECREE ON CONSUMERS' COMMUNES[154]

The war, brought about by the conflict between capitalists for the division of the spoils of depredation, has resulted in untold ruin. This is intensified by criminal speculation and profiteering, particularly among the wealthy classes, which have brought the tortures of hunger and unemployment to hundreds of thousands and even millions of people. The need to adopt extraordinary measures to aid the starving and to wage merciless war on speculators has induced the workers' and peasants' government to enact the following regulations as a law of the Russian Republic:

Every citizen of the state shall belong to a local (village, volost, hamlet, section of a town, section of a street, etc.) consumers' society.

The grouping of families in the consumers' societies shall be voluntary, except for the proviso that not less than two-thirds of the number of families in each society must belong to the non-affluent classes (i.e., workers, peasants not employing hired labour, and so on).

Apart from the purchase and distribution of products, every consumers' society shall engage in the sale of local products. The boards of the consumers' societies shall set up *committees of supplies*, and no transport of products shall be permitted without the written sanction of the appropriate committee of supplies.

Existing consumers' societies are hereby nationalised and shall be obliged to admit to membership the whole population of the localities in which they are situated, without exception.

If they so desire private individuals may purchase products in the central stores and not in their local shops, but

only on condition that the relevant entry is made in the book of the local consumers' society.

The transport, purchase and sale of products without a permit from the committees of supplies shall be punishable by the confiscation of the whole of the property of the offender, by imprisonment for a period of not less than six months and by sentence to compulsory labour.

Permits for the transport or the purchase and sale of products shall be drawn up in duplicate and signed by not less than three members of the board of the committee of supplies concerned, one copy being filed by the board.

Each permit must state from which and to which consumers' society the products are being consigned.

Telegraph offices shall give priority to the telegrams of the committees of supplies.

All committees of supplies shall act under the control and in accordance with the instructions of the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Every individual shall be entitled to acquire at his consumers' society any product, without any restrictions whatsoever, except for such regulations as may be established to limit the import of products from abroad.

Products produced for sale must be delivered to the local committee of supplies at uncontrolled prices, except in cases when fixed prices are established by law. Money received for products sold shall be entered to the account of the owners in the local (village, volost, city, factory or other) branch of the People's Bank.

Every Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies must appoint a group of inspectors, auditors and instructors to assist the population to establish consumers' societies (committees of supplies) and check their accounts and all their business.

Instructions on keeping the accounts and on the correspondence of the committees of supplies will be issued separately.

Written December 24-27, 1917
(January 6-9, 1918)

First published on January 22 1929 in *Izvestia* No. 18

Published according to the manuscript

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON THE RADA'S REPLY TO THE C.P.C.

The Council of People's Commissars regards the Rada's reply as so indefinite and evasive as to verge on mockery. The main source of difference with the Rada was the fact clearly indicated by the Council of People's Commissars in its first message to the Rada containing the proposal for peace talks.* The message said that we regarded the Rada's direct or indirect support of the Kaledinites as unconditional ground for military operations against the Rada. Counter-revolutionary elements of landowners and the bourgeoisie from every part of Russia have rallied round Kaledin. He has against him a clear majority of the peasants and working Cossacks even in the Don area. It is obvious to everyone that Soviet power has been accepted by the majority of the population of Russia, above all by the working masses of all nations. The revolutionary movement of the Ukrainian working classes for the transfer of all power to the Soviets is assuming ever greater proportions in the Ukraine itself and holds out the prospect of an early victory over the Ukrainian bourgeoisie.

The Rada's evasion of the question of whether it is prepared to stop giving direct and indirect support to the Kaledinites has wrecked the peace talks we had started and makes the Rada fully responsible for the continued civil war which the bourgeois classes of the various nations have launched and which is absolutely hopeless, because the overwhelming majority of the workers, peasants and soldiers

* See pp. 361-63 of this volume.—*Ed.*

have come down solidly on the side of the Soviet Socialist Republic.

As for the national demands of the Ukrainians, the independence of their people's republic, and its right to federate, these are all recognised by the Council of People's Commissars and are not in dispute at all.

Written on December 30, 1917
(January 12, 1918)

Published on December 31, 1917
(January 13, 1918), in *Pravda*
No. 227 and *Izvestia* No. 264

Published according
to the manuscript

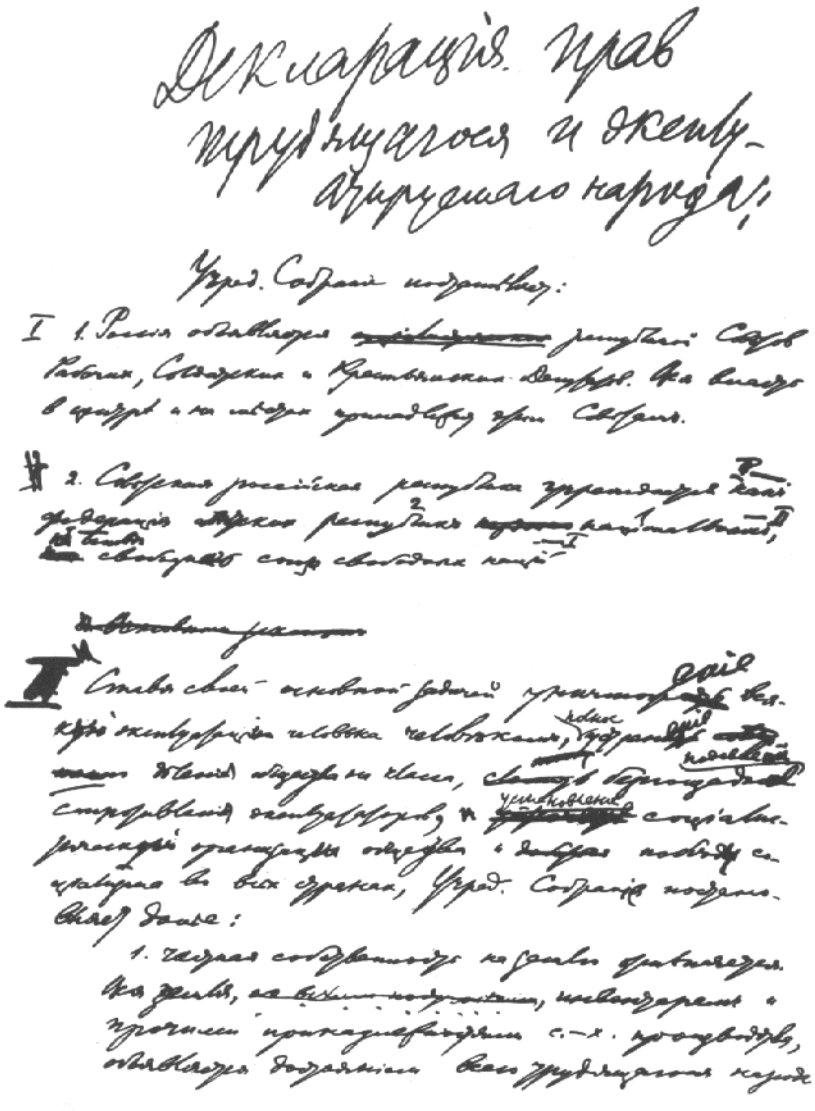
SPEECH AT THE SEND-OFF OF THE SOCIALIST ARMY'S FIRST TROOP TRAINS JANUARY 1 (14), 1918[155]

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Comrades, I greet you as the living embodiment of the Russian proletariat's determination to fight for the triumph of the Russian revolution, for the triumph of its great slogans not only in this country, but also among the peoples of the whole world. I greet you as the first heroic volunteers of the socialist army, who are to build up a mighty revolutionary army. This army is called upon to safeguard the gains of the revolution and our people's power, the Soviets of Soldiers', Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the whole of this new and truly democratic system, against the attacks of all the enemies of the people, who are bending all efforts to destroy the revolution. These enemies are the world capitalists who are now organising a crusade against the Russian revolution, which holds out the prospect of liberation to all working people. We must show that we are a force capable of overcoming every obstacle on the way to world revolution. Let the example of the comrades going into the trenches buoy up the weak, steady the hesitant and rouse the weary. The peoples hear our revolution's clarion call and are awakening; our army's ranks will soon be swelled by the proletarian forces of other countries and we shall no longer be alone. (*Comrade Lenin's words were drowned in shouts of greetings and prolonged applause. The volunteers of the socialist army accompanied Comrade Lenin to his car to the strains of the Internationale.*)

Pravda No. 3 (evening edition), January 17 (4), 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text


Декларация прав трудящегося и эксплуатируемого народа.

Учред. Собрание постановляет:

I 1. Россия объявляется республикой Советов рабочих, солдатских и крестьянских депутатов. Вся власть в центре и на местах принадлежит этим Советам.

2. Советская российская республика учреждается на основе свободного союза свободных наций, как федерация советских республик.

Стоя на почве [illegible] основного факта человеческой [illegible] жизни, [illegible] стремлений эксплуатируемых, [illegible] декларация признает [illegible] и [illegible] на всех съездах. Учред. Собрание подтверждает:

1. Задача совершенного устранения [illegible] на землю, на воды, на [illegible] и прочие принадлежности с.-х. производства, объявляется достоянием всего трудящегося народа

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People." Early January 1918

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First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People." Early January 1918

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DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE[156]

The Constituent Assembly resolves:

I. 1. Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

II. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves:

1. Private ownership of land is hereby abolished. All land together with all buildings, farm implements and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is proclaimed the property of the entire working people.

2. The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Economic Council are hereby confirmed for the purpose of guaranteeing the power of the working people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the working people from the yoke of capital.

4. For the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted.

5. To ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

III. 1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organising most extensive fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same end in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and proclaiming freedom of self-determination for Armenia.[157]

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, the landowners and the bourgeoisie as a first blow struck at international banking, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that Soviet power will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

IV. Having been elected on the basis of party lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, when the people were not yet in a position to rise *en masse* against the exploiters, had not yet experienced the full strength of resistance of the latter in defence of their class privileges, and had not yet

applied themselves in practice to the task of building socialist society, the Constituent Assembly considers that it would be fundamentally wrong, even formally, to put itself in opposition to Soviet power.

In essence the Constituent Assembly considers that now, when the people are waging the last fight against their exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Supporting Soviet power and the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, the Constituent Assembly considers that its own task is confined to establishing the fundamental principles of the socialist reconstruction of society.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

Written not later than January 3 (16), 1918

Published in *Pravda* No. 2 and *Izvestia* No. 2, January 4 (17), 1918

Published according to the manuscript

LETTER TO THE ARMY CONGRESS ON THE DEMOBILISATION OF THE ARMY

Dear comrades,

Comrade Podvoisky has told me of your proposal and I ask you not to take amiss the fact that I am forced to confine myself to writing a letter to you. I whole-heartedly welcome your confidence that *you will succeed in the great task of building a socialist army*—in view of all the present difficulties and in spite of them. We may be in one of the critical periods of the revolution, when Soviet power is threatened both by an external foe—the German and other imperialists—and an internal one—the counter-revolutionaries hiding behind the slogan of "All Power to the Constituent Assembly".

We shall overcome this crisis as well. There is not the least doubt about it. The Soviets will retain the power they have won. The socialist revolution has begun. It will go on to victory in Russia and the whole world.

With best wishes of success and courage in your work.

Yours,
Lenin

(*The reading of the letter was met with loud, prolonged applause.*)

Written on January 3 (16), 1918

Published on January 6 (19), 1918 in the newspaper *Armia i Flot Rabochei i Krestyanskoi Rossii* No. 4

Published according to the newspaper text

DIRECT-LINE CONVERSATION WITH L. D. TROTSKY, CHAIRMAN OF THE SOVIET PEACE DELEGATION AT BREST-LITOVSK JANUARY 3 (16), 1918

1

Lenin here. I have just received your special letter. Stalin is away and I have not yet been able to show it to him. I think your plan is worth discussing. Can its final implementation be somewhat deferred, and the final decision taken after a special Central Executive Committee meeting over here? I shall show the letter to Stalin as soon as he returns.

Lenin.

2

I should like to consult Stalin before replying to your question. A delegation of the Kharkov Ukrainian Central Executive Committee, which has assured me that the Kiev Rada is on its last legs, is leaving today to join you.

Lenin.

3

Stalin has just arrived, I shall discuss it with him, and will shortly let you know our joint reply.

Lenin.

4

Please inform Trotsky. Request arrange adjournment and return to Petrograd.

Lenin. Stalin.

First published in 1929 in the magazine *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 5

Published according to the telegraph tape

RESOLUTION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE JANUARY 3 (16), 1918

On the basis of all the achievements of the October Revolution, and in accordance with the Declaration of the Working and Exploited People adopted at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee of January 3, 1918, all power in the Russian Republic belongs to the Soviets and the Soviet institutions. Accordingly, any attempt by any person or institution whatsoever to usurp any of the functions of state power will be regarded as a counter-revolutionary act. All such attempts will be suppressed by every means at the disposal of the Soviet power, including the use of armed force.

Pravda No. 2 and *Izvestia* No. 2, January 4 (17), 1918

Published according to the manuscript

DECLARATION OF THE R.S.D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS) GROUP AT THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MEETING JANUARY 5 (18), 1918[158]

The vast majority of working Russia—workers, peasants and soldiers—have demanded that the Constituent Assembly should recognise the gains of the Great October Revolution, the Soviet decrees on land, peace and workers' control, and above all the power of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee, fulfilling the will of the vast majority of the working classes of Russia, has proposed that the Constituent Assembly should declare itself bound by this will. However, the majority of the Constituent Assembly—in line with the pretensions of the bourgeoisie, has rejected this proposal, thereby challenging the whole of working Russia.

The majority in the Constituent Assembly went to the Party of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party of Kerensky, Avksentyev and Chernov. This party, which calls itself socialist and revolutionary, is leading the fight of the bourgeois elements against the workers' and peasants' revolution and is in fact a bourgeois and counter-revolutionary party.

The Constituent Assembly, as at present constituted, is the result of the balance of forces obtaining before the Great October Revolution. The present counter-revolutionary majority of the Constituent Assembly elected on outdated party lists, is a reflection of an earlier period of the revolution and is trying to throw up a roadblock in the way of the workers' and peasants' movement.

The day-long debate has shown that the Party of Right Socialist-Revolutionaries continues, as it did under Kerensky, to lavish the people with promises of all manner of

things; actually it has decided to fight against the power of the workers', peasants' and soldiers' Soviets, against the socialist measures, the transfer of land and all implements to the peasants without compensation, the nationalisation of banks, and the repudiation of the state debt.

Refusing for a single moment to cover up the crimes of the enemies of the people, we make this announcement of our withdrawal from the Constituent Assembly, leaving it to Soviet power to take the final decision on the attitude to the counter-revolutionary section of the Constituent Assembly.

Pravda No. 5 (evening edition), January 19 (6), 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text

PEOPLE FROM ANOTHER WORLD

"Friends, I have lost a day," says an old Latin tag. One cannot help but recall it when one remembers how the fifth of January was lost.

After real, lively, Soviet work among workers and peasants engaged on *real tasks*, clearing the forest and uprooting the stumps of landowner and capitalist exploitation, we were suddenly transported to "another world", to arrivals from another world, from the camp of the bourgeoisie with its willing or unwilling, conscious or unconscious champions, with its hangers-on, servants and advocates. Out of the world in which the working people and their Soviet organisation were conducting the struggle against the exploiters we were transported to the world of saccharine phrases, of slick, empty declamations, of promises and more promises based, as before, on conciliation with the capitalists.

It is as though history had accidentally, or by mistake, turned its clock back, and January 1918 for a single day became May or June 1917!

It was terrible! To be transported from the world of living people into the company of corpses, to breathe the odour of the dead, to hear those mummies with their empty "social" Louis Blanc[159] phrases, to hear Chernov and Tsereteli, was simply intolerable.

Comrade Skvortsov was right when he rapped out to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries these two or three brief phrases, simple, calm and at the same time ruthlessly cutting: "Between us everything is over. We are carrying the October Revolution against the bourgeoisie to its culmination. We and you are on different sides of the barricades."

In reply to that came a torrent of over-smooth, empty phrases from Chernov and Tsereteli that carefully avoided only (only!) one question—that of Soviet power, of the October Revolution. "Let there be no civil war, let there be no sabotage," said Chernov, invoking the revolution in the name of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. And the latter who for six months, from June 1917 to January 1918, had been sleeping like corpses in their coffins, stood up and clapped furiously and persistently. It is really so easy and so pleasant to settle the problems of the revolution by an incantation. "Let there be no civil war, let there be no sabotage, let everybody recognise the Constituent Assembly." In what way does that differ, in essence, from the invocation: "Let the workers and capitalists make peace"? Not in any way. The Kaledins and Ryabushinskys together with their imperialist friends in all countries will not disappear or change their policy because of the invocations of the mealy-mouthed Chernov or because of Tsereteli's boring precepts that seem to have been taken from a misunderstood, poorly read and misinterpreted book.

Either conquer the Kaledins and Ryabushinskys or give up the revolution. Either victory over the exploiters in the civil war, or the collapse of the revolution. Such has been the issue in *all* revolutions, in the English revolution in the seventeenth century, in the French in the eighteenth century and in the German in the nineteenth century. How could it be thought that the Russian revolution in the twentieth century would *not* face that issue? How can wolves become lambs?

Tsereteli and Chernov do not show a grain of an idea, not the slightest desire to accept the fact of the class struggle that has become civil war, not by chance, not suddenly, not because of somebody's caprice or ill will, but inevitably, in the long process of revolutionary development.

It was a hard, boring and irksome day in the elegant rooms of the Taurida Palace, whose very aspect differs from that of Smolny approximately in the same way as elegant, but moribund bourgeois parliamentarism differs from the plain, proletarian Soviet apparatus that is in many ways still disorderly and imperfect but is living and vital. There, in that old world of bourgeois parliamentarism, the leaders

of hostile classes and hostile groups of the bourgeoisie did their *fencing*. Here, in the new world of the proletarian and peasant, socialist state, the oppressed classes are making clumsy, inefficient....*

Written on January 6 (19), 1918
First published on January 21, 1926 in *Pravda* No. 17
Published according to the manuscript

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* Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed*.

DRAFT DECREE ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY[160]

At its very inception, the Russian revolution produced the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the only mass organisation of all the working and exploited classes capable of leading the struggle of these classes for their complete political and economic emancipation.

During the whole of the initial period of the Russian revolution the Soviets multiplied in number, grew and gained strength and were taught by their own experience to discard the illusions of compromise with the bourgeoisie and to realise the deceptive nature of the forms of the bourgeois-democratic parliamentary system; they arrived by practical experience at the conclusion that the emancipation of the oppressed classes was impossible unless they broke with these forms and with every kind of compromise. The break came with the October Revolution, which transferred the entire power to the Soviets.

The Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of electoral lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, was an expression of the old relation of political forces which existed when power was held by the compromisers and the Cadets. When the people at that time voted for the candidates of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, they were not in a position to choose between the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the supporters of the bourgeoisie, and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the supporters of socialism. The Constituent Assembly, therefore, which was to have crowned the bourgeois parliamentary republic, was bound to become an obstacle in the path of the October Revolution and Soviet power.

The October Revolution, by giving power to the Soviets, and through the Soviets to the working and exploited classes, aroused the desperate resistance of the exploiters, and in the crushing of this resistance it fully revealed itself at the beginning of the socialist revolution. The working classes learned by experience that the old bourgeois parliamentary system had outlived its purpose and was absolutely incompatible with the aim of achieving socialism, and that not national institutions, but only class institutions (such as the Soviets) were capable of overcoming the resistance of the propertied classes and of laying the foundations of socialist society. To relinquish the sovereign power of the Soviets, to relinquish the Soviet Republic won by the people, for the sake of the bourgeois parliamentary system and the Constituent Assembly, would now be a step backwards and would cause the collapse of the October workers' and peasants' revolution.

Owing to the above-mentioned circumstances, the Party of Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party of Kerensky, Avksentyev and Chernov, obtained the majority in the Constituent Assembly which met on January 5. Naturally, this party refused to discuss the absolutely clear, precise and unambiguous proposal of the supreme organ of Soviet power, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, to recognise the programme of Soviet power, to recognise the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People, to recognise the October Revolution and Soviet power. By this action the Constituent Assembly severed all ties with the Soviet Republic of Russia. It was inevitable that the Bolshevik group and the Left Socialist-Revolutionary group, who now patently constitute the overwhelming majority in the Soviets and enjoy the confidence of the workers and the majority of the peasants, should withdraw from such a Constituent Assembly.

The Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties are in fact carrying on outside the Constituent Assembly a most desperate struggle against Soviet power, calling openly in their press for its overthrow and describing as arbitrary and unlawful the crushing of the resistance of the exploiters by the forces of the working classes, which is essential in the interests of emancipation from exploita-

tion. They are defending the saboteurs, the servants of capital, and are going as far as undisguised calls to terrorism, which certain "unidentified groups" have already begun. It is obvious that under such circumstances the remaining part of the Constituent Assembly could only serve as a screen for the struggle of the counter-revolutionaries to overthrow Soviet power.

Accordingly, the Central Executive Committee resolves that the Constituent Assembly is hereby dissolved.

Written on January 6 (19), 1918

Published in *Izvestia* No. 5, January 7, 1918

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DELIVERED TO THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE JANUARY 6 (19), 1918

Comrades, the clash between Soviet power and the Constituent Assembly results from the entire course of the Russian revolution, which was confronted by the unprecedented task of reconstructing society on socialist lines. After the events of 1905 there could be no doubt that tsarism's day was over and that it had scrambled out of the pit only because of the backwardness and ignorance of the rural population. The Revolution of 1917 was marked on the one hand by the transformation of the bourgeois imperialist party into a republican party under the pressure of events, and on the other hand, by the emergence of democratic organisations, the Soviets, that had been formed in 1905; even then the socialists had realised that the organisation of these Soviets was creating something great, something new and unprecedented in the history of world revolution. The Soviets, created solely by the initiative of the people, are a form of democracy without parallel in any other country of the world.

The revolution produced two forces—the union of the masses for the purpose of overthrowing tsarism, and the organisations of the working people. When I hear the enemies of the October Revolution exclaim that the ideas of socialism are unfeasible and utopian, I usually put to them a plain and simple question. What in their opinion, I ask, are the Soviets? What gave rise to these organisations of the people, which have no precedent in the history of the development of world revolution? Not one of them has been able to give a precise answer to this question. Defending the

bourgeois system by inertia, they oppose these powerful organisations, the formation of which has never before been witnessed in any revolution in the world. All who are fighting the landowners are joining forces with the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. The Soviets embrace all who do not wish to stand idle and are devoting themselves to creative work. They have spread their network over the whole country, and the denser this network of Soviets of the people, the less will it be possible to exploit the working people. For the existence of the Soviets is incompatible with a prosperous bourgeois system. That is the source of all the contradictions among the bourgeoisie, who are fighting our Soviets solely in their own interests.

The transition from capitalism to a socialist system entails a long and bitter struggle. Having overthrown tsarism, the Russian revolution was bound to go farther; it could not stop at the victory of the bourgeois revolution; for the war, and the untold sufferings it caused the exhausted peoples, created a soil favourable for the outbreak of the social revolution. Nothing, therefore, is more ludicrous than the assertion that the subsequent development of the revolution, and the revolt of the masses that followed, were caused by a party, by an individual, or, as they vociferate, by the will of a "dictator". The fire of revolution broke out solely because of the incredible sufferings of Russia, and because of the conditions created by the war, which sternly and inexorably faced the working people with the alternative of taking a bold, desperate and fearless step, or of perishing, of dying from starvation.

And revolutionary fire was manifest in the creation of the Soviets—the mainstay of the workers' revolution. The Russian people have made a gigantic advance, a leap from tsarism to the Soviets. That is a fact, irrefutable and unpa^ ralleled. While the bourgeois parliaments of all countries and states, confined within the bounds of capitalism and private property, have never anywhere supported a revolutionary movement, the Soviets, having lit the fire of revolution, imperatively command the people to fight, take everything into their own hands, and organise themselves. In the course of a revolution called forth by the strength of the Soviets there are certain to be all kinds of errors and blunders.

But everybody knows that revolutionary movements are always and inevitably accompanied by temporary chaos, destruction and disorder. Bourgeois society is the same war, the same shambles; and it was this circumstance that gave rise to and accentuated the conflict between the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets. Those who point out that we are now "dissolving" the Constituent Assembly although at one time we defended it are not displaying a grain of sense, but are merely uttering pompous and meaningless phrases. At one time, we considered the Constituent Assembly to be better than tsarism and the republic of Kerensky with their famous organs of power; but as the Soviets emerged, they, being revolutionary organisations of the whole people, naturally became incomparably superior to any parliament in the world, a fact that I emphasised as far back as last April. By completely smashing bourgeois and landed property and by facilitating the final upheaval which is sweeping away all traces of the bourgeois system, the Soviets impelled us on to the path that has led the people to organise their own lives. We have taken up this great work of organisation, and it is well that we have done so. Of course, the socialist revolution cannot be immediately presented to the people in a clean, neat and impeccable form; it will inevitably be accompanied by civil war, sabotage and resistance. Those who assert the contrary are either liars or cowards. (*Stormy applause.*) The events of April 20, when the people, without any directions from "dictators" or parties, came out independently and solidly against the government of compromisers, showed even then that the bourgeoisie were weak and had no solid support. The masses sensed their power, and to placate them the famous game of ministerial leapfrog began, the object of which was to fool the people. But the people very soon saw through the game, particularly after Kerensky, both his pockets stuffed with predatory secret treaties with the imperialists, began to move the armies for an offensive. Gradually the activities of the compromisers became obvious to the deceived people, whose patience began to be exhausted. The result was the October Revolution. The people learned by experience, having suffered torture, executions and wholesale shootings and it is nonsense for the butchers to assert that the Bolsheviks, or cer-

tain "dictators", are responsible for the revolt of the working people. They are given the lie by the split that is occurring among the people themselves at congresses, meetings, conferences, and so forth. The people have not yet fully understand the October Revolution. This revolution has shown in practice how the people must take into their own hands, the hands of the workers' and peasants' state, the land, the natural resources, and the means of transport and production. Our cry was, All power to the Soviets; it is for this we are fighting. The people wanted the Constituent Assembly summoned, and we summoned it. But they sensed immediately what this famous Constituent Assembly really was. And now we have carried out the will of the people, which is—All power to the Soviets. As for the saboteurs, we shall crush them. When I came from Smolny, that fount of life and vigour, to the Taurida Palace, I felt as though I were in the company of corpses and lifeless mummies. They drew on all their available resources in order to fight socialism, they resorted to violence and sabotage, they even turned knowledge—the great pride of humanity—into a means of exploiting the working people. But although they managed to hinder somewhat the advance towards the socialist revolution, they could not stop it and will never be able to. Indeed the Soviets that have begun to smash the old, outworn foundations of the bourgeois system, not in gentlemanly, but in a blunt proletarian and peasant fashion, are much too strong.

To hand over power to the Constituent Assembly would again be compromising with the malignant bourgeoisie. The Russian Soviets place the interests of the working people far above the interests of a treacherous policy of compromise disguised in a new garb. The speeches of those outdated politicians, Chernov and Tsereteli, who continue whining tediously for the cessation of civil war, give off the stale and musty odour of antiquity. But as long as Kaledin exists, and as long as the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly" conceals the slogan "Down with Soviet power", civil war is inevitable. For nothing in the world will make us give up Soviet power! (*Stormy applause.*) And when the Constituent Assembly again revealed its readiness to postpone all the painfully urgent problems and tasks that were

placed before it by the Soviets, we told the Constituent Assembly that they must not be postponed for one single moment. And by the will of Soviet power the Constituent Assembly, which has refused to recognise the power of the people, is being dissolved. The Ryabushinskys have lost their stakes; their attempts at resistance will only accentuate and provoke a new outbreak of civil war.

The Constituent Assembly is dissolved. The Soviet revolutionary republic will triumph, no matter what the cost. (*Stormy applause. Ovation.*)

Pravda No. 6,
January 22 (9), 1918

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to the *Pravda* text

ON THE HISTORY OF THE QUESTION OF THE UNFORTUNATE PEACE

It might be argued that this is no time to deal with history. Certainly, this kind of assertion would be permissible if a particular question from the past were not inseparably and directly connected in practice with the present. The question of the unfortunate peace, the exceptionally harsh peace is, however, such a burning question that it calls for elucidation. I am therefore publishing my theses on this subject that were read at a meeting of about sixty of the leading Petrograd Party functionaries on January 8, 1918.

Here are these theses:

January 7, 1918.

THESES ON THE QUESTION OF THE IMMEDIATE CONCLUSION OF A SEPARATE AND ANNEXATIONIST PEACE[161]

1. The position of the Russian revolution at the present moment is such that nearly all the workers and the vast majority of the peasants undoubtedly side with Soviet power and the socialist revolution which it has started. To that extent the socialist revolution in Russia is assured.

2. At the same time, the civil war, provoked by the frantic resistance of the wealthy classes, who realise full well that they are faced with the last and decisive fight for the preservation of private ownership of the land and means of production, has not yet reached its climax. The victory of Soviet power in this war is assured, but some time must inevitably elapse, no little exertion of effort will inevitably

be required, a certain period of acute economic dislocation and chaos, which accompany all wars, and civil war in particular, is inevitable, before the resistance of the bourgeoisie is crushed.

3. Furthermore, this resistance, in its less active and non-military forms—sabotage, the hire of declassed elements and agents of the bourgeoisie, who worm their way into the ranks of the socialists in order to ruin their cause, and so on and so forth—has proved so stubborn and capable of assuming such diversified forms, that the fight against it will inevitably require some more time, and, in its main forms, is hardly likely to end until several months have passed. And unless this passive and covert resistance of the bourgeoisie and its supporters is definitely crushed the socialist revolution cannot succeed.

4. Lastly, the organisational problems of the socialist transformation of Russia are so immense and difficult that their solution—in view of the numerous petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers of the socialist proletariat, and of the latter's low cultural level—will also require a fairly long time.

5. All these circumstances taken together are such as to make it perfectly clear that for the success of socialism in Russia a certain amount of time, several months at least, will be necessary, during which the hands of the socialist government must be absolutely free to achieve victory over the bourgeoisie first in our own country and to launch far-reaching mass organisational work on a wide scale.

6. The position of the socialist revolution in Russia must form the basis of any definition of the international tasks of our Soviet power, for the international situation in the fourth year of the war is such that it is quite impossible to predict the probable moment of outbreak of revolution and overthrow of any of the European imperialist governments (including the German). That the socialist revolution in Europe must come, and will come, is beyond doubt. All our hopes for the *final* victory of socialism are founded on this certainty and on this scientific prognosis. Our propaganda activities in general, and the organisation of fraternisation in particular, must be intensified and extended. It would be a mistake, however, to base the tactics of the Russian socialist government on attempts to determine

whether or not the European, and especially the German, socialist revolution will take place in the next six months (or some such brief period). Inasmuch as it is quite impossible to determine this, all such attempts, objectively speaking, would be nothing but a blind gamble.

7. The peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk have by now—January 7, 1918—made it perfectly clear that the war party has undoubtedly gained the upper hand in the German Government (which has the other governments of the Quadruple Alliance at its beck and call) and has virtually already presented Russia with an ultimatum (and it is to be expected, most certainly to be expected, that any day now it will be presented formally). The ultimatum is as follows: either the continuation of the war, or a peace with annexations, i.e., peace on condition that we surrender all the territory we have occupied, while the Germans retain all the territory they have occupied and impose upon us an indemnity (outwardly disguised as payment for the maintenance of prisoners)—an indemnity of about three thousand million rubles, payable over a number of years.

8. The socialist government of Russia is faced with the question—a question whose solution brooks no delay—of whether to accept this peace with annexations now, or to immediately wage a revolutionary war. In fact, no middle course is possible. No further postponement can now be achieved, for we have *already* done everything possible and impossible to deliberately protract the negotiations.

9. On examining the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, the first argument we encounter is that a separate peace at this juncture would, objectively speaking, be an agreement with the German imperialists, an "imperialistic deal", and so forth, and that, consequently, such a peace would mean a complete break with the fundamental principles of proletarian internationalism.

This argument, however, is obviously incorrect. Workers who lose a strike and sign terms for the resumption of work which are unfavourable to them and favourable to the capitalists, do not betray socialism. The only people who betray socialism are those who secure advantages for a section of the workers in exchange for profit to the capitalists; only such agreements are impermissible in principle.

He betrays socialism who calls the war with German imperialism a defensive and just war, but actually receives support from the Anglo-French imperialists, and conceals secret treaties concluded with them from the people. He does not in the least betray socialism who, without concealing anything from the people, and without concluding any secret treaties with the imperialists, agrees to sign terms of peace which are unfavourable to the weak nation and favourable to the imperialists of one group, if at that moment there is no strength to continue the war.

10. Another argument in favour of immediate war is that, by concluding peace, we objectively become agents of German imperialism, for we afford it the opportunity to release troops from our front, we surrender to it millions of prisoners of war, and so on. But this argument too is manifestly incorrect, for a revolutionary war at the present juncture would, objectively speaking, make us agents of Anglo-French imperialism, by providing it with forces which would promote its aims. The British bluntly offered our Commander-in-Chief, Krylenko, one hundred rubles per month for every one of our soldiers provided we continued the war. Even if we did not take a single kopek from the Anglo-French, we nevertheless would be helping them, objectively speaking, by diverting part of the German army.

From that point of view, in neither case would we be entirely escaping some sort of imperialist bond, and it is obvious that it is impossible to escape it completely without overthrowing world imperialism. The correct conclusion from this is that the moment a socialist government triumphed in any one country, questions must be decided, not from the point of view of whether this or that imperialism is preferable, but exclusively from the point of view of the conditions which best make for the development and consolidation of the socialist revolution which has already begun.

In other words, the underlying principle of our tactics must not be, which of the two imperialisms it is more profitable to aid at this juncture, but rather, how the socialist revolution can be most firmly and reliably ensured the possibility of consolidating itself, or, at least, of maintaining itself in one country until it is joined by other countries.

11. It is said that the German Social-Democratic opponents of the war have now become "defeatists" and are requesting us not to yield to German imperialism. But we recognised defeatism only in respect of *one's own* imperialist bourgeoisie, and we always discountenanced victory over an alien imperialism, victory attained in formal or actual alliance with a "friendly" imperialism, as a method impermissible in principle and generally wrong.

This argument is therefore only a modification of the previous one. If the German Left Social-Democrats were proposing that we delay concluding a separate peace for a *definite* period, and guaranteed revolutionary action in Germany within this period, the question *might* assume a different aspect for us. Far from saying this, however, the German Lefts formally declare: "Hold out as long as you can, but decide the question from the point of view of the state of affairs in the *Russian* socialist revolution, for we cannot promise you anything positive regarding the German revolution."

12. It is said that in a number of Party statements we actually "promised" a revolutionary war, and that by concluding a separate peace we would be going back on our word.

That is not true. We said that in the era of imperialism a socialist government *had to* "*prepare for and wage*" a revolutionary war*; we said this in order to combat abstract pacifism and the theory that "defence of the fatherland" must be completely rejected in the era of imperialism, and, lastly to combat the purely selfish instincts of a part of the soldiers, but we never gave any pledge to start a revolutionary war without considering whether it is possible to wage it at a given moment.

Unquestionably, even at this juncture we must *prepare for* a revolutionary war. We are carrying out this promise, as we have, in general, carried out all our promises that could be carried out at once: we annulled the secret treaties, offered all peoples a fair peace, and several times did our best to drag out peace negotiations so as to give other peoples a chance to join us.

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* See present edition, Vol. 21, p. 404.—Ed.

But the question whether it is possible to carry on a revolutionary war *now*, *immediately*, must be decided exclusively from the point of view of whether material conditions permit it, and of the interests of the socialist revolution which has already begun.

13. Summing up the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, we have to conclude that such a policy might perhaps answer the human yearning for the beautiful, dramatic and striking, but that it would totally disregard the objective balance of class forces and material factors at the present stage of the socialist revolution now under way.

14. There can be no doubt that our army is absolutely in no condition at the present moment, and will not be for the next few weeks (and probably for the next few months), to beat back a German offensive successfully; firstly, owing to the extreme fatigue and exhaustion of the majority of the soldiers, coupled with the incredible chaos in the matter of food supply, replacement of the overfatigued, etc.; secondly, owing to the utter unfitness of the horses and the consequent inevitable ruin of our artillery; and, thirdly, owing to the absolute impossibility of defending the coastline from Riga to Revel, which affords the enemy a very certain chance of seizing the rest of Lifland, and then Estland, and of outflanking a large part of our forces, and finally, of capturing Petrograd.

15. Further, there is not the slightest doubt that the peasant majority of our army would at the present juncture unreservedly declare in favour of a peace with annexations and not in favour of an immediate revolutionary war; the socialist reorganisation of the army, the merging of the Red Guard detachments with it, and so on, have only just begun.

With the army completely democratised, to carry on war in defiance of the wishes of the majority of the soldiers would be a reckless gamble, while to create a really staunch and ideologically stable socialist workers' and peasants' army will, at the very least, require months and months.

16. The poor peasants in Russia are capable of supporting the socialist revolution led by the working class, but they are not capable of agreeing to fight a serious revolutionary war immediately, at the present juncture. To ignore the

objective balance of class forces on this issue would be a fatal error.

17. Consequently, the situation at present with regard to a revolutionary war is as follows:

If the German revolution were to break out and triumph in the coming three or four months, the tactics of an immediate revolutionary war might perhaps not ruin our socialist revolution.

If, however, the German revolution does not occur in the next few months, the course of events, if the war is continued, will inevitably be such that grave defeats will compel Russia to conclude an even more disadvantageous separate peace, a peace, moreover, which would be concluded, not by a socialist government, but by some other (for example, a bloc of the bourgeois Rada and Chernov's followers, or something similar). For the peasant army, which is exhausted to the limit by the war, will after the very first defeats—and very likely within a matter of weeks, and not of months—overthrow the socialist workers' government.

18. This being the state of affairs, it would be absolutely impermissible tactics to stake the fate of the socialist revolution, which has already begun in Russia, merely on the chance that the German revolution may begin in the immediate future, within a matter of weeks. Such tactics would be a reckless gamble. We have no right to take such risks.

19. The German revolution will by no means be made more difficult of accomplishment as far as its objective premises are concerned, if we conclude a separate peace. Probably chauvinist intoxication will weaken it for a time, but Germany's position will remain extremely grave, the war with Britain and America will be a protracted one, and aggressive imperialism will be fully and completely exposed on both sides. A socialist Soviet Republic in Russia will stand as a living example to the peoples of all countries, and the propaganda and revolutionising effect of this example will be immense. There—the bourgeois system and a fully exposed predatory war between two groups of marauders. Here—peace and a socialist Soviet Republic.

20. In concluding a separate peace we free ourselves *as much as is possible at the present moment* from both hostile

imperialist groups, we take advantage of their mutual enmity and warfare which hamper concerted action on their part against us, and for a certain period have our hands free to advance and to consolidate the socialist revolution. The reorganisation of Russia on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the nationalisation of the banks and large-scale industry, coupled with *exchange of products* in kind between the towns and the small-peasant consumers' societies, is quite feasible economically, provided we are assured a few months in which to work in peace. And such a reorganisation will render socialism invincible both in Russia and all over the world, and at the same time will create a solid economic basis for a mighty workers' and peasants' Red Army.

21. A really revolutionary war at this juncture would be a war waged by a socialist republic against the bourgeois countries, with the aim—an aim clearly defined and fully approved by the socialist army—of overthrowing the bourgeoisie in other countries. However, we *obviously* cannot set ourselves this aim at the *present* moment. Objectively, we would be fighting now for the liberation of Poland, Lifland and Courland. But no Marxist, without renouncing the principles of Marxism and of socialism generally, can deny that the interests of socialism are higher than the interests of the right of nations to self-determination. Our socialist republic has done all it could, and continues to do all it can to give effect to the right to self-determination of Finland, the Ukraine, etc. But if the concrete situation is such that the existence of the socialist republic is being imperilled at the present moment on account of the violation of the right to self-determination of several nations (Poland, Lifland, Courland, etc.), naturally the preservation of the socialist republic has the higher claim.

Consequently, whoever says, "We cannot sign a humiliating, atrocious, etc., peace, betray Poland, and so forth", does not realise that by concluding peace on the condition that Poland is liberated, he would only be strengthening German imperialism against Britain, Belgium, Serbia and other countries *still further*. Peace on the condition of the liberation of Poland, Lifland and Courland would be a "patriotic" peace *from the point of view of Russia*, but would by

no means cease to be a peace *with the annexationists*, with the German imperialists.

January 21, 1918. The following should be added to the above theses:

22. The mass strikes in Austria and Germany, and, subsequently, the formation of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies in Berlin and Vienna, and, lastly, beginning from January 18-20, armed clashes and street fighting in Berlin—all this should be regarded as evidence of the fact that the revolution in Germany has begun.

This fact offers us the opportunity, for the time being, of further delaying and dragging out the peace negotiations.

Written—the Theses on January 7 (20); Thesis 22 on January 21 (February 3); Introduction prior to February 11 (24), 1918

Published without Thesis 22 in *Pravda* No. 34 February 24 (11), 1918 Signed: *N. Lenin*

Introduction published according to the *Pravda* text, Theses according to the manuscript

AFTERWORD TO THE THESES ON THE QUESTION OF THE IMMEDIATE CONCLUSION OF A SEPARATE AND ANNEXATIONIST PEACE

I read the above Theses to a small private meeting of Party functionaries on January 8, 1918. The discussion on them showed three opinions in the Party on this question—about a half those present spoke in favour of revolutionary war (this was sometimes called the "Moscow" point of view because the Moscow Regional Bureau of our Party adopted it earlier than other organisations); then about a quarter were for Comrade Trotsky who proposed to "declare the cessation of hostilities, demobilise the army, send the soldiers home but refrain from signing a treaty", and, lastly, about a quarter supported me.

The state of affairs now obtaining in the Party reminds me very strongly of the situation in the summer of 1907 when the overwhelming majority of the Bolsheviks favoured the boycott of the Third Duma and I stood side by side with Dan in favour of participation and was subjected to furious attacks for my opportunism. Objectively, the present issue is a complete analogy; as then, the majority of the Party functionaries, proceeding from the very best revolutionary motives and the best Party traditions, allow themselves to be carried away by a "flash" slogan and *do not grasp the new* socio-economic and political situation, do not take into consideration *the change in the conditions* that demands a speedy and abrupt change in tactics. The essence of my argument, today as then, is to make clear that Marxism demands the consideration of objective conditions and their changes, that the question must be presented concretely as

applicable to those conditions, that the most significant change that has occurred is the foundation of the Russian Soviet Republic, and the preservation of the republic that has already begun the socialist revolution is most important to us and to the *international socialist movement*; that at the moment the slogan of revolutionary war proclaimed by Russia would either be an empty phrase and an unsupported demonstration, or would be tantamount, objectively, to falling into the trap set for us by the imperialists, who wish to *inveigle* us into continuing the *imperialist war* while we are still a weak unit, so that the young Soviet Republic might be *crushed* as cheaply as possible.

"I stand by Lenin's old position," exclaimed one young Muscovite (youth is one of the greatest virtues distinguishing that group of speakers) . And that same speaker reproached me for repeating the old arguments of the defencists about the improbability of a revolution in Germany.

The whole trouble is that the Muscovites want to stick to the old *tactical* position, and stubbornly refuse to see the *change* that has taken place, the *new objective* situation that has arisen.

The Muscovites, in their zealous repetition of old slogans, have not even taken into consideration the fact that we Bolsheviks have now all become defencists. Having overthrown the bourgeoisie, having denounced and exposed the secret treaties, having proposed peace to all peoples, actually...*

Written between January 8 and 11 (21 and 24), 1918

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according to the manuscript

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* Here the manuscript breaks off.—*Ed*.

THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS', SOLDIERS' AND PEASANTS' DEPUTIES[162]

JANUARY 10-18 (23-31), 1918

Published in *Izvestia* Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 15, January 12, 13, 14 and 20, 1918, and *Pravda* Nos. 9, 10 and 15, January 26-27 (13-14) and February 2 (January 20), 1918

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Draft Decree on expunging references to the Constituent Assembly from Soviet legislation first published in 1931 in *Lenin Miscellany XVIII*

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1
REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS JANUARY 11 (24)

Comrades, on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars I must submit to you a report of its activities for the two months and fifteen days that have elapsed since the establishment of Soviet power and the Soviet Government in Russia.

Two months and fifteen days—that is only five days more than the preceding workers' power lasted and ruled over a whole country, or over the exploiters and the capitalists, the power of the Paris workers at the time of the Paris Commune of 1871.

We must first of all remember this workers' power, we must cast our minds back and compare it with the Soviet power that was formed on October 25. And if we compare the preceding dictatorship of the proletariat with the present one we shall see at once what a gigantic stride the international working-class movement has made, and in what an immeasurably more favourable position Soviet power in Russia finds itself, notwithstanding the incredibly complicated conditions of war and economic ruin.

After retaining power for two months and ten days, the workers of Paris, who for the first time in history established the Commune, the embryo of Soviet power, perished at the hands of the French Cadets, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries of a Kaledin type. The French workers had to pay an unprecedentedly heavy price for the first experience of workers' government, the meaning and purpose of which the overwhelming majority of the peasants in France did not know.

We find ourselves in immeasurably more favourable circumstances because the Russian soldiers, workers and peasants were able to create the Soviet Government, an apparatus which informed the whole world of their methods of struggle. It is this that puts the Russian workers and peasants in a position that differs from the power of the Paris proletariat. They had no apparatus, the country did not understand them; we were immediately able to rely on Soviet power, and that is why we never doubted that Soviet power enjoys the sympathy and the warmest and most devoted support of the overwhelming majority of the people, and that therefore Soviet power is invincible.

Those who were sceptical of Soviet power and frequently, either consciously or unconsciously, sold and betrayed it for compromise with the capitalists and the imperialists, raised a deafening clamour about the power of the proletariat alone not being able to be maintained in Russia. As if any Bolsheviks or their supporters forgot even for a moment that in Russia only that power could last for any length of time that would be able to unite the working class and the majority of the peasants, all the working and exploited classes, in a single, inseparably interconnected force fighting against the landowners and the bourgeoisie.

We never doubted that only the alliance of the workers and the poor peasants, the semi-proletarians, mentioned in our Party Programme, can, in Russia, embrace the majority of the population and ensure firm support for the government. And after October 25 we were immediately able, in the course of several weeks, to overcome all difficulties and establish a government on the basis of this firm alliance.

Yes, comrades! When the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, in its old form—when the peasants did not yet understand who in this party were real advocates of socialism—put forward the slogan of equalitarian land tenure, without caring who was to put it through, whether it was to be effected in alliance with the bourgeoisie or not, we branded that as a fraud. And this section, which has, now realised that the people are not with it and that it is a bubbler claimed that it could carry out equalitarian land tenure in alliance with the bourgeoisie. In this lay the basic fraud. And when the Russian revolution presented an example of collabora-

tion between the working people and the bourgeoisie, in the greatest moment in the life of the people; when the war had been ruining the people and dooming millions to death from starvation and its consequences showed what compromise meant in practice; when the Soviets themselves experienced it and felt it after having passed through the school of compromise, it became obvious that there was a sound, virile and great socialist core in the teachings of those who wanted to unite the working section of the peasants with the great socialist movement of the workers of the whole world.

And as soon as this became a clear and distinct practical question to the peasants, something happened of which no one had any doubt, as has now been proved by the Peasants' Soviets and Congresses: when the time came to implement socialism, the peasants were able to see clearly these two main political lines—alliance with the bourgeoisie, or alliance with the working people. They then realised that the party which expressed the real aims and interests of the peasants was the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party. And when we concluded our government alliance with this party, we, from the very outset, arranged it so that the alliance rested on the clearest and most obvious principles. If the peasants of Russia want to socialise the land in alliance with the workers who will nationalise the banks and establish workers' control, then they are our loyal colleagues, our most loyal and valuable allies. Comrades, no socialist would refuse to admit the obvious truth that between socialism and capitalism there lies a long, more or less difficult transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that the forms this period will take will be determined to a large extent by whether small or big ownership, small- or large-scale farming, predominates. It goes without saying that the transition to socialism in Estland, that small country in which the whole population is literate, and which consists of large-scale farms, cannot be the same as the transition to socialism in Russia, which is mainly a petty-bourgeois country. This must be taken into account.

Every politically-conscious socialist says that socialism cannot be imposed upon the peasants by force and that we must count only on the power of example and on the mass of

the peasants assimilating day-to-day experience. How would the peasants prefer to pass to socialism? This is the problem which now confronts the Russian peasants in practice. How can they support the socialist proletariat and begin the transition to socialism? The peasants have already tackled this transition, and we have complete confidence in them.

The alliance we concluded with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries is built on a firm basis and is growing stronger and stronger by the hour. At first we on the Council of People's Commissars feared that factional struggle would hinder the work, but now, after the experience of two months' work together, I must say definitely that on the majority of questions we arrive at unanimous decisions.

We know that only when experience has shown the peasants, for example, the kind of exchange there must be between town and country they will themselves, from below, on the basis of their own experience, establish their own connections. On the other hand, the experience of the Civil War has demonstrated to the peasants that there is no other road to socialism except the dictatorship of the proletariat and the ruthless suppression of the rule of the exploiters. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, every time we touch upon this theme, at the present meeting, or in the Central Executive Committee, I, from time to time, hear from the Right side of the meeting the exclamation "Dictator!" Yes, "when we were socialists" everyone recognised the dictatorship of the proletariat; they even wrote about it in their programmes, they were indignant at the widespread false idea that it was possible to persuade and prove to the population that the working people ought not to be exploited, that this was sinful and disgraceful, and that once people were persuaded of this there would be paradise on earth. No, this utopian notion was smashed in theory long ago, and now our task is to smash it in practice.

We must not depict socialism as if socialists will bring it to us on a plate all nicely dressed. That will never happen. Not a single problem of the class struggle has ever been solved in history except by violence. When violence is exercised by the working people, by the mass of exploited against the exploiters—then we are for it! (*Stormy applause.*) And we

are not in the least disturbed by the howls of those people who consciously or unconsciously side with the bourgeoisie, or who are so frightened by them, so oppressed by their rule, that they have been flung into consternation at the sight of this unprecedentedly acute class struggle, have burst into tears, forgotten all their premises and demand that we perform the impossible, that we socialists achieve complete victory without fighting against the exploiters and without suppressing their resistance.

As far back as the summer of 1917 the exploiters understood that it is a matter of "the last and decisive battles", and that if the Soviets came to power the last bulwark of the bourgeoisie, their principal source for suppressing the working people, would be torn out of their hands.

That is why the October Revolution began this systematic and unswerving struggle to compel the exploiters to cease their resistance and to become reconciled to the idea, no matter how difficult that may be for even the best of them, that the rule of the exploiting classes has gone never to return, that from now on the ordinary peasant will give the orders and that they must obey, however unpleasant that may be.

This will entail many difficulties, sacrifices and mistakes; it is something new, unprecedented in history and cannot be studied from books. It goes without saying that this is the greatest and most difficult transition that has ever occurred in history; but there is no other way to make this great transition and the fact that Soviet power has been established in Russia has shown that it is the revolutionary people who are richest of all in revolutionary experience—when millions come to the assistance of a few score of Party people—the people who actually take their exploiters by the throat.

That is why civil war has acquired predominance in Russia at the present time. Against us is advanced the slogan: "Down with civil war!" I happened to hear this shouted from the Right benches of the so-called Constituent Assembly. Down with civil war.... What does that mean? Civil war against whom? Against Kornilov, Kerensky and Ryabushinsky who are spending millions to bribe vagabonds and officials? Against the saboteurs who, consciously or unconsciously, are accepting these bribes? Undoubtedly, among the latter

there are ignorant people who accept these bribes unconsciously, because they cannot even imagine that the old bourgeois system can and must be destroyed to the very foundation and that an entirely new, socialist society can and must be built up on its ruins. Undoubtedly there are people like that, but does that alter the situation?

That is why the representatives of the propertied classes are staking their all, that is why these are the last and decisive battles for them, and they would stop at no crime in their efforts to smash Soviet power. Does not the whole history of socialism, particularly of French socialism, which is so rich in revolutionary striving, show us that when the working people themselves take power in their hands the ruling classes resort to unheard-of crimes and shootings if it is a matter of protecting their money-bags. When these people talk to us about civil war we answer them with ridicule; but when they spread their slogans among the students we say—you are deceiving them!

The class struggle did not accidentally assume its latest form, the form in which the exploited class takes all the means of power in its own hands in order to completely destroy its class enemy, the bourgeoisie, in order to sweep from the land of Russia not only the bureaucrats, but also the landowners, as the Russian peasants in several gubernias have done.

We are told that the sabotage with which the bureaucrats and the landowners met the Council of People's Commissars is an indication of their unwillingness to assist socialism, as if it were not clear that the whole of this gang of capitalists and swindlers, vagabonds and saboteurs, represent a single gang bribed by the bourgeoisie and resisting the power of the working people. Of course, those who thought that it was possible to leap straight from capitalism to socialism, or those who imagined that it was possible to convince the majority of the population that this could be achieved through the medium of the Constituent Assembly—those who believed in this bourgeois democratic fable, can go on blithely believing it, but let them not complain if life destroys this fable.

Those who have come to understand what the class struggle means, what the sabotage organised by the bureau-

crats means, know that we cannot leap straight into socialism. There remained the bourgeoisie, capitalists, who hope to restore their rule and who defend their money-bags. There remained vagabonds, a section of corrupt people who are absolutely downtrodden by capitalism and who are unable to grasp the idea of the proletarian struggle. There remained office employees, bureaucrats who believe that it is in the interests of society to protect the old system. How can anyone imagine that the victory of socialism can come about except by the complete collapse of these sections, except by the complete destruction of the Russian and European bourgeoisie? Do you think the Ryabushinskys do not understand their class interests? It is they who are paying the saboteurs not to work. Or do they operate disunited? Are they not operating in conjunction with the French, British and American capitalists by buying up securities? It remains to be seen whether they will get much out of these transactions. Will not the heaps of securities they are now buying up turn out to be merely useless heaps of scrap-paper?

That is why, comrades, our reply to all the reproaches and accusations hurled against us of employing terror, dictatorship, civil war, although we are far from having resorted to real terror, because we are stronger than they—we have the Soviets, it will be sufficient if we nationalise the banks and confiscate their property in order to compel them to submit—our reply to all these charges of instigating civil war is: yes, we have openly proclaimed what no other government has been able to proclaim. The first government in the world that can speak openly of civil war is the government of the workers, peasants and soldiers. Yes, we have started and we are waging civil war against the exploiters. The more straightforwardly we say this, the more quickly will this war come to an end, the more quickly will all the working and exploited people understand us, will understand that Soviet power is fighting for the real, vital cause of all the working people.

Comrades, I do not think we shall achieve victory in this struggle quickly, but we are very rich in experience: we have managed to achieve a great deal in the course of two months. We have experienced Kerensky's attempt to launch an attack against Soviet power and the complete

failure of this attempt. We have experienced the organisation of power of the Ukrainian Kerenskys—the struggle has not yet ended there, but to anyone who has watched it, who has heard at least a few truthful reports from representatives of Soviet power, it is obvious that the bourgeois elements of the Ukrainian Rada are living their last days. (*Applause.*) There cannot be the slightest doubt about the victory of Soviet power, of the Ukrainian People's Republic, over the Ukrainian bourgeois Rada.

As for the struggle against Kaledin—here, indeed, everything rests on the basis of the exploitation of the working people, on the basis of the bourgeois dictatorship—if there is any social basis at all against Soviet power. The Peasants' Congress has clearly demonstrated that Kaledin's cause is hopeless; the working people are against him. The experience of Soviet power, propaganda by deeds, by the example of the Soviet organisations, is having its effect, and Kaledin's stronghold in the Don Region is now collapsing—not so much externally as internally.

That is why, looking at the civil war front in Russia, we can say with complete conviction: here the victory of Soviet power is complete and absolutely assured. And, comrades, the victory of Soviet power is being achieved because right from the outset it began to realise the age-old aspirations of socialism, while consistently and determinedly relying on the people and considering it to be its duty to awaken the most oppressed and downtrodden sections of society to active life, to raise them to socialist creative work. That is why the old army with its barrack-square drilling and torture of soldiers has retreated into the past. It has been thrown on the scrap-heap, nothing remains of it. (*Applause.*) The complete democratisation of the army has been carried out.

Permit me to relate an incident that occurred when I was in the carriage of a Finnish train and I overheard a conversation between several Finns and an old woman. I could not take part in the conversation because I cannot speak Finnish. But one of the Finns turned to me and said: "Do you know the curious thing this old woman said? She said, 'Now there is no need to fear the man with the gun. I was in the woods one day and I met a man with a gun, and

instead of taking the firewood I had collected from me, he added some more.'"

When I heard that, I said to myself: let the hundreds of newspapers, no matter what they call themselves—socialist, near-socialist, etc.—let hundreds of extremely loud voices shout at us, "dictators", "violators", and similar words. We know that another voice is now rising from among the people; they say to themselves: now we need not be afraid of the man with the gun because he protects the working people and will be ruthless in suppressing the rule of the exploiters. (*Applause.*) This is what the people have felt, and that is why the propaganda that simple and uneducated people are carrying on when they relate how the Red Guards are turning their might against the exploiters—that propaganda is invincible. It will spread among millions and tens of millions, and will firmly create what the French Commune of the nineteenth century began to create, but was able to continue for only a very short time because it was wrecked by the bourgeoisie—it will create a socialist Red Army, something all socialists have always aimed at, i.e., the general arming of the people. It will create new Red Guard cadres that will enable us to train the working people for the armed struggle.

It used to be said about Russia that she would be unable to fight because she would have no officers. But we must not forget what these very bourgeois officers said as they observed the workers fighting against Kerensky and Kaledin. They said: "The Red Guards' technical level is very low, but if these people had a little training they would have an invincible army." This is because, for the first time in the history of the world struggle, elements have entered the army which are not the vehicles of bureaucratic knowledge, but are guided by the idea of the struggle to emancipate the exploited. And when the work we have commenced is completed, the Russian Soviet Republic will be invincible. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, the road which Soviet power has traversed insofar as concerns the socialist army has also been traversed insofar as concerns another instrument of the ruling classes, an even more subtle, an even more complicated instrument—the bourgeois court, which claimed to maintain

order, but which, as a matter of fact, was a blind, subtle instrument for the ruthless suppression of the exploited, and an instrument for protecting the interests of the moneybags. Soviet power acted in the way all the proletarian revolutions had shown that it must act; it immediately threw the old court on to the scrap-heap. Let them shout that we, without reforming the old court, immediately threw it on to the scrap-heap. By that we paved the way for a real people's court, and not so much by the force of repressive measures as by massive example, the authority of the working people, without formalities; we transformed the court from an instrument of exploitation into an instrument of education on the firm foundations of socialist society. There is no doubt whatever that we cannot attain such a society at once.

These, then, are the main steps Soviet power has taken along the road indicated by the experience of the great popular revolutions throughout the world. There has not been a single revolution in which the working people did not begin to take some steps along this road in order to set up a new state power. Unfortunately, they only began to do this, but were unable to finish, they were unable to create the new type of state power. We have created it—we have already established a socialist Republic of Soviets.

I have no illusions about our having only just entered the period of *transition* to socialism, about not yet having reached socialism. But if you say that our state is a socialist Republic of Soviets, you will be right. You will be as right as those who call many Western bourgeois republics democratic republics although everybody knows that not one of even the most democratic of these republics is completely democratic. They grant scraps of democracy, they cut off tiny bits of the rights of the exploiters, but the working people are as much oppressed there as they are everywhere else. Nevertheless, we say that the bourgeois system is represented by both old monarchies and by constitutional republics.

And so in our case now. We are far from having completed even the transitional period from capitalism to socialism. We have never cherished the hope that we could finish it without the aid of the international proletariat.

We never had any illusions on that score, and we know how difficult is the road that leads from capitalism to socialism. But it is our duty to say that our Soviet Republic is a socialist republic because we have taken this road, and our words will not be empty words.

We have initiated many measures undermining the capitalists' rule. We know that our power had to unite the activities of all our institutions by a single principle, and this principle we express in the words: "Russia is declared to be a Socialist Republic of Soviets." (*Applause.*) This will be that truth which rests on what we must do and have already begun to do, this will be the best unification of all our activities, the proclamation of our programme, a call to the working people and the exploited of all countries who either do not know at all what socialism is, or, what is worse, believe that socialism is the Chernov-Tsereteli mess of bourgeois reforms which we have tasted and tried during the ten months of the revolution and which we have become convinced is a falsification and not socialism.

And that is why "free" Britain and France did all they could during the ten months of our revolution to prevent a single copy of Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary newspapers from entering their countries. They had to act in this way because they saw that the workers and peasants in all countries instinctively grasped what the Russian workers were doing. There was not a single meeting where news about the Russian revolution and the slogan of Soviet power was not hailed with stormy applause. The working people and the exploited everywhere have already come into conflict with their party top leadership. The old socialism of these leaders is not yet buried like that of Chkheidze and Tsereteli in Russia, but it is already done for in all countries of the world, it is already dead.

A new state—the Republic of Soviets, the republic of the working people, of the exploited classes that are breaking down the old bourgeois barriers, now stands against the old bourgeois system. New state forms have been created, which make it possible to suppress the exploiters, to overcome the resistance of this insignificant handful who are still strong because of yesterday's money-bags and yesterday's store of knowledge. They—the professors,

teachers and engineers—transform their knowledge into an instrument for the exploitation of the working people, saying they want their knowledge to serve the bourgeoisie, otherwise they refuse to work. But their power has been broken by the workers' and peasants' revolution, and a state is rising against them in which the people themselves freely elect their own representatives.

It is precisely at the present time that we can say that we really have an organisation of power which clearly indicates the transition to the complete abolition of any power, of any state. This will be possible when every trace of exploitation has been abolished, that is, in socialist society.

Now I shall deal briefly with the measures which the socialist Soviet Government of Russia has begun to realise. The nationalisation of the banks was one of the first measures adopted for the purpose, net only of wiping the landowners from the face of Russian earth, but also of eradicating the rule of the bourgeoisie and the possibility of capital oppressing millions and tens of millions of the working people. The banks are important centres of modern capitalist economy. They collect fantastic wealth and distribute it over this vast country; they are the nerve centres of capitalist life. They are subtle and intricate organisations, which grew up in the course of centuries; and against them were hurled the first blows of Soviet power which at first encountered desperate resistance in the State Bank. But this resistance did not deter Soviet power. We succeeded in the main thing in organising the State Bank; this main thing is in the hands of the workers and peasants. After these basic measures, which still require a lot of working out in detail, we proceeded to lay our hands on the private banks.

We did not act in the way the compromisers would probably have recommended us to do, i.e., first wait until the Constituent Assembly is convened, then perhaps draft a bill and introduce it in the Constituent Assembly and by that inform the bourgeoisie of our intentions and enable them to find a loophole through which to extricate themselves from this unpleasant thing; perhaps draw them into our company, and then make state laws—that would be a "state act".

That would be the rejection of socialism. We acted quite simply; not fearing to call forth the reproaches of the "educated" people, or rather of the uneducated supporters of the bourgeoisie who were trading in the remnants of their knowledge, we said we had at our disposal armed workers and peasants. This morning they must occupy all the private banks. (*Applause.*) After they have done that, after power is in our hands, only after this, we shall discuss what measures to adopt. In the morning the banks were occupied and in the evening the Central Executive Committee issued a decree: "The banks are declared national property"—state control, the socialisation of banking, its transfer to Soviet power, took place.

There was not a man among us who could imagine that an intricate and subtle apparatus like banking, which grew out of the capitalist system of economy in the course of centuries, could be broken or transformed in a few days. We never said that. And when scientists, or pseudo-scientists, shook their heads and prophesied, we said: you can prophesy what you like. We know only one way for the proletarian revolution, namely, to occupy the enemy's positions—to learn to rule by experience, from our mistakes. We do not in the least belittle the difficulties in our path, but we have done the main thing. The source of capitalist wealth has been undermined in the place of its distribution. After all this, the repudiation of the state loans, the overthrow of the financial yoke, was a very easy step. The transition to confiscation of the factories, after workers' control had been introduced, was also very easy. When we were accused of breaking up production into separate departments by introducing workers' control, we brushed aside this nonsense. In introducing workers' control, we knew that it would take much time before it spread to the whole of Russia, but we wanted to show that we recognise only one road—changes from below; we wanted the workers themselves, from below, to draw up the new, basic economic principles. Much time will be required for this.

From workers' control we passed on to the creation of a Supreme Economic Council. Only this measure, together with the nationalisation of the banks and railways which will be carried out within the next few days, will make it

possible for us to begin work to build up a new socialist economy. We know perfectly well the difficulties that confront us in this work; but we assert that only those who set to work to carry out this task relying on the experience and the instinct of the working people are socialists in deed. The people will commit many mistakes, but the main thing has been done. They know that when they appeal to Soviet power they will get whole-hearted support against the exploiters. There is not a single measure intended to ease their work that was not entirely supported by Soviet power. Soviet power does not know everything and cannot handle everything in time, and very often it is confronted with difficult tasks. Very often delegations of workers and peasants come to the government and ask, for example, what to do with such-and-such a piece of land. And frequently I myself have felt embarrassed when I saw that they had no very definite views. And I said to them: you are the power, do all you want to do, take all you want, we shall support you, but take care of production, see that production is useful. Take up useful work, you will make mistakes, but you will learn. And the workers have already begun to learn; they have already begun to fight against the saboteurs. Education has been turned into a fence which hinders the advance of the working classes; it will be pulled down.

Undoubtedly, the war is corrupting people both in the rear and at the front; people who are working on war supplies are paid far above the rates, and this attracts all those who hid themselves to keep out of the war, the vagabond and semi-vagabond elements who are imbued with one desire, to "grab" something and clear out. But these elements are the worst that has remained of the old capitalist system and are the vehicles of all the old evils; these we must kick out, remove, and we must put in the factories all the best proletarian elements and form them into nuclei of future socialist Russia. This is not an easy task, it will give rise to many conflicts, to much friction and many clashes. We, the Council of People's Commissars, and I personally, have heard complaints and threats from them, but we have remained calm, knowing that now we have a judge to whom we can appeal. That judge is the Soviets of Workers' and

Soldiers' Deputies. (*Applause.*) The word of this judge is indisputable, and we shall always rely upon it.

Capitalism deliberately differentiates the workers in order to rally an insignificant handful of the upper section of the working class around the bourgeoisie. Conflicts with this section are inevitable. We shall not achieve socialism without a struggle. But we are ready to fight, we have started it and we shall finish it with the aid of the apparatus called the Soviets. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies will easily solve any problem we bring before it. For however strong the group of privileged workers may be, when they are brought before the representative body of all the workers, then this court, I repeat, will be indisputable for them. This sort of adjustment is only just beginning. The workers and peasants have not yet sufficient confidence in their own strength; age-old tradition has made them far too used to waiting for orders from above. They have not yet fully appreciated the fact that the proletariat is the ruling class; there are still elements among them who are frightened and downtrodden and who imagine that they must pass through the despicable school of the bourgeoisie. This most despicable of bourgeois notions has remained alive longer than all the rest, but it is dying and will die out completely. And we are convinced that with every step Soviet power takes the number of people will constantly grow who have completely thrown off the old bourgeois notion that a simple worker and peasant cannot administer the state. Well, if he sets to doing it, he can and will learn! (*Applause.*)

And it will be our organisational task to select leaders and organisers from among the people. This enormous, gigantic work is now on the agenda There could even be no thought of carrying it out if it were not for Soviet power, a filtering apparatus which can promote people.

Not only have we a state law on control, we have something even far more valuable—attempts on the part of the proletariat to enter into agreements with the manufacturers' associations in order to guarantee the workers' management over whole branches of industry. Such an agreement has begun to be drawn up, and is almost completed, between the leather workers and the all-Russia leather manufactur-

ers' society. I attach very special importance to these agreements,[163] they show that the workers are becoming aware of their strength.

Comrades, in my report I have not dealt with the particularly painful and difficult questions of peace and the food supply, because they are special items on the agenda and will be discussed separately.

My purpose in making this brief report was to show, as it appears to me and to the whole of the Council of People's Commissars, the entire history of what we have experienced during the past two and a half months, how the relation of class forces took shape in this new period of the Russian revolution, how a new state power was formed and what social tasks confront it.

Russia has started to achieve socialism in the right way—by the nationalisation of the banks and the transfer of all the land entirely to the working people. We are well aware of the difficulties that lie ahead, but we are convinced, by comparing our revolution with previous revolutions, that we shall achieve enormous successes and that we are on the road that guarantees complete victory.

And with us will go the masses of the more advanced countries, countries which have been divided by a predatory war, whose workers have passed through a longer period of training in democracy. When people depict the difficulties of our task, when we are told that the victory of socialism is possible only on a world scale, we regard this merely as an attempt, a particularly hopeless attempt, on the part of the bourgeoisie and of its voluntary and involuntary supporters to distort the irrefutable truth. The final victory of socialism in a single country is of course impossible. Our contingent of workers and peasants which is upholding Soviet power is one of the contingents of the great world army, which at present has been split by the world war, but which is striving for unity, and every piece of information, every fragment of a report about our revolution, every name, the proletariat greets with loud and sympathetic cheers, because it knows that in Russia the common cause is being pursued, the cause of the proletariat's uprising, the international socialist revolution. A living example, tackling the job somewhere in one country is more effective than any procla-

mations and conferences; this is what inspires the working people in all countries.

The October strike in 1905—the first steps of the victorious revolution—immediately spread to Western Europe and then, in 1905, called forth the movement of the Austrian workers; already at that time we had a practical illustration of the value of the example of revolution, of the action by the workers in one country, and today we see that the socialist revolution is maturing by the hour in all countries of the world.

If we make mistakes and blunders and meet with obstacles on our way, that is not what is important to them; what is important to them is our example, that is what unites them. They say: we shall go together and conquer, come what may. (*Applause.*)

The great founders of socialism, Marx and Engels, having watched the development of the labour movement and the growth of the world socialist revolution for a number of decades saw clearly that the transition from capitalism to socialism would require prolonged birth-pangs, a long period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the break-up of all that belonged to the past, the ruthless destruction of all forms of capitalism, the co-operation of the workers of all countries, who would have to combine their efforts to ensure complete victory. And they said that at the end of the nineteenth century "the Frenchman will begin it, and the German will finish it"[164]—the Frenchman would begin it because in the course of decades of revolution he had acquired that intrepid initiative in revolutionary action that made him the vanguard of the socialist revolution.

Today we see a different combination of international socialist forces. We say that it is easier for the movement to start in the countries that are not among those exploiting countries which have opportunities for easy plunder and are able to bribe the upper section of their workers. The pseudo-socialist, nearly all ministerial, Chernov-Tsereteli parties of Western Europe do not accomplish anything, and they lack firm foundations. We have seen the example of Italy; during the past few days we witnessed the heroic struggle of the Austrian workers against the predatory imperialists.[165] Though the pirates may succeed in holding up

the movement for a time, they cannot stop it altogether, it is invincible.

The example of the Soviet Republic will stand before them for a long time to come. Our socialist Republic of Soviets will stand secure, as a torch of international socialism and as an example to all the working people. Over there—conflict, war, bloodshed, the sacrifice of millions of people, capitalist exploitation; here—a genuine policy of peace and a socialist Republic of Soviets.

Things have turned out differently from what Marx and Engels expected and we, the Russian working and exploited classes, have the honour of being the vanguard of the international socialist revolution; we can now see clearly how far the development of the revolution will go. The Russian began it—the German, the Frenchman and the Englishman will finish it, and socialism will be victorious. (*Applause.*)

2
CONCLUDING SPEECH ON THE REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS
JANUARY 12 (25)

Having listened today to the speakers on the Right, who voiced objections to my report, I am surprised that they have not yet learned anything and have forgotten all that they in vain call "Marxism". One of the objectors declared that we had favoured the dictatorship of democracy, that we had recognised the rule of democracy. That declaration was so absurd, so utterly meaningless, that it is merely a collection of words. It was just like saying "iron snow", or something similar. (*Laughter.*) Democracy is a form of bourgeois state championed by all traitors to genuine socialism, who now find themselves at the head of official socialism and who assert that democracy is contrary to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Until the revolution transcended the limits of the bourgeois system, we were for democracy; but as soon as we saw the first signs of socialism in the progress of the revolution, we took a firm and resolute stand for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is strange that people who cannot or refuse to understand this plain truth, this definition of the meaning of the terms "democracy" and "dictatorship of the proletariat", should make bold to bring before so numerous an assembly old, utterly worthless rubbish, such as that in which all the objecting gentlemen's speeches abound. Democracy is formal parliamentarism, but in reality it is a continuous, cruel mockery, heartless, unbearable oppression of the working people by the bourgeoisie. And this can only be denied by those who are not true spokesmen for the working class but wretched men in mufflers who have kept away from life all

the time, who have been sleeping with an old, shabby little book carefully stowed away under the pillow, the unwanted book that serves them as a guide and manual in implanting official socialism. But the minds of tens of millions of those who are doing things create something infinitely loftier than the greatest genius can foresee. Genuine, revolutionary socialism did not break away today but at the beginning of the war. This significant break, this rift in socialist theory, has come about in every country and every state. And it is splendid that socialism has split!

We can counter the accusation that we are fighting against "socialists" by saying merely that in the epoch of parliamentarism these supporters of the latter no longer have anything in common with socialism but have become decayed, obsolete and backward, and have ended by deserting to the bourgeoisie. "Socialists" who shouted about "defending the country" during a war resulting from the imperialist urge of international robbers are not socialists but hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, their dish-lickers.

Those who talk so much about the dictatorship of democracy merely utter meaningless, absurd phrases which indicate neither economic knowledge nor political understanding.

One of the objectors said here that the Paris Commune can be proud of the fact that during the Paris workers' uprising there was no violence or arbitrary action on their part; but it is beyond doubt that the Commune fell only because it did not make proper use of armed force at the right moment, although it won undying fame in history, for it was the first to put the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat into practice.

Commenting briefly on the struggle against the bourgeoisie, landowners and capitalists, the speaker declared firmly and resolutely, amidst a burst of applause: "Say what you may, the bourgeoisie will in the end be forced by the will of the revolutionary people either to capitulate, or to perish."

Drawing a parallel between anarchism and Bolshevik views, Comrade Lenin said that at that time, in the period of a radical break-up of the bourgeois system, the concept of anarchism was finally assuming concrete features. But

if the oppression of the bourgeois system was to be abolished, there would have to be firm revolutionary power of the working classes, the power of a revolutionary state. This was the essence of communism. When the masses were themselves taking up arms to start an unrelenting struggle against the exploiters, when a new people's power was being applied that had nothing in common with parliamentary power, it was no longer the old state, outdated in its traditions and forms, that they had before them, but something new, something based on the creative power of the people. And while some anarchists spoke of the Soviets with fear because they were still influenced by obsolete views, the new, fresh trend in anarchism was definitely on the side of the Soviets, because it saw their vitality and their ability to win the sympathy of the working masses and arouse their creative energy.

"Your sin and blindness," said the speaker, turning to the "objectors", "are due to your failure to learn anything from the revolution. As early as April 4, I affirmed, speaking in this hall, that the Soviets are the highest form of democracy.* Either the Soviets will perish and then the revolution will be irrevocably lost, or the Soviets will live and then it will be ridiculous to talk of a bourgeois-democratic revolution at a time when the socialist system is on the way to its full development and capitalism is collapsing. The Bolsheviks spoke of a bourgeois-democratic revolution in 1905, but today, when the Soviets are in power, when the workers, soldiers and peasants have said—in a war situation unprecedented for hardships and horrors, in an atmosphere of ruin, and in the face of death by starvation—that they will assume full power and will themselves set about building a new life, there can be no question of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. And the Bolsheviks said as much at their congresses and meetings and conferences, and in their resolutions and decisions, as early as last April.

"To those who say that we have done nothing, that we have been inactive all the time, that Soviet rule has borne no fruits, we can say this: Look wherever there are working people, look among the masses, and you will see organisa-

* See present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 21-26.—*Ed.*

tional, creative work in full swing, you will see the stir of a life that is being renewed and hallowed by the revolution. The peasants are taking over the land in the countryside, the workers are seizing the factories, and all kinds of organisations are springing up everywhere.

"Soviet power is striving to bring the war to an end, and we are confident that it will achieve this goal earlier than Kerensky government spokesmen have promised. For the revolution has become a factor in the matter of ending the war, a factor which has denounced treaties and repudiated loans. The war will come to an end due to the international revolutionary movement."

In conclusion, the speaker commented in a few words on counter-revolutionary saboteurs, saying that they were groups bribed by the bourgeoisie, which showered its gifts on the sabotaging officials who declared war on the Soviet state, for the triumph of reaction. To them it was doomsday, the irrevocable end of everything when they saw the people striking vigorously at the bourgeoisie with a peasants' and workers' axe. "Our only fault, if any, is that we were much too humane, much too kind-hearted, towards the monstrously treacherous representatives of the bourgeois-imperialist system.

"A few days ago some *Novaya Zhizn* writers visited me, saying they had come on behalf of bank employees who wanted to take up service and submit fully to Soviet power, stopping the policy of sabotage. High time, I answered.* But, speaking confidentially, if they imagine that having begun those talks, we shall cede our revolutionary positions one iota, they are sorely mistaken.

"The world has never seen anything like that which is now taking place here in Russia, in this vast country broken up into a number of separate states and containing an enormous number of heterogeneous nationalities and peoples. I refer to the immense organisational work in every uyezd and region, the organisation of the lower strata, the work of the masses themselves, the creative, constructive activity, which encounters obstacles raised by various bourgeois representatives of imperialism. They, the workers and

* See p. 501 of this volume.—*Ed.*

peasants, are engaged in an effort unprecedented in its titanic aims; together with the Soviets, they will smash capitalist exploitation, and bourgeois oppression will in the end be abolished once and for all."

3
DRAFT DECREE ON EXPUNGING REFERENCES TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FROM SOVIET LEGISLATION

DECREE

A number of laws, decrees and decisions taken by the Soviet Government contain references to the Constituent Assembly and its legislative character.

All these references naturally become irrelevant and lapse with the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly by the Central Executive Committee and the approval of this step by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

Accordingly, the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets resolves: any references to the forthcoming Constituent Assembly shall be expunged from all new editions of decrees and laws of the Soviet Government.

Written on January 18 (31), 1918

4
SUMMING-UP SPEECH AT THE CONGRESS
JANUARY 18 (31)

Comrades, before the Third Congress of Soviets closes we must establish with complete impartiality the momentous part it has had to play in the history of the international revolution and of mankind. There are incontestable grounds for saying that the Third Congress of Soviets has opened a new epoch in world history and there is growing awareness of its significance in these times of world revolution. It has consolidated the organisation of the new state power which was created by the October Revolution and has projected the lines of future socialist construction for the whole world, for the working people of all countries.

The new system of the socialist Soviet Republic, as a federation of free republics of the different nations inhabiting Russia, has been finally accepted in this country in the sphere of domestic politics. It is now clear to all, and even to our enemies, I daresay, that the new system, the Soviet power, is not an invention or a party trick, but is the result of the development of life itself, the outcome of the world revolution as it spontaneously takes shape. You will recall that all great revolutions invariably strove to raze the old capitalist system to the ground; they strove not only to win political rights but also to wrest the very reins of government from the hands of the ruling classes, and all the exploiters and oppressors of the working people, so as to put an end to all exploitation and all oppression for good. Great revolutions strove to demolish this old exploiting state machine but had not managed to bring it off until now. And now Russia, in virtue of the peculiarities of her economic and political position, has first achieved this transfer of

government powers into the hands of the working people. We shall now proceed to build, on the space cleared of historical rubbish, the airy towering edifice of the socialist society. A new type of state power is being created for the first time in history, a power that the will of the revolution has called upon to wipe out all exploitation, oppression and slavery the world over.

Let us take a look at what the new socialist principle of government has yielded in the sphere of our domestic policy. Comrades, you will recall that just recently the bourgeois press was vociferously accusing us of destroying the Russian state and saying that we were incapable of running the country, and so all the nationalities—Finland, the Ukraine, etc.—were leaving us. The bourgeois press, transported with malicious joy, carried almost daily reports of such "secessions". We. comrades, had a better understanding than they of the main causes of this phenomenon which were rooted in the working people's mistrust of the conciliatory imperialist government of Kerensky and Co. We kept silent, being quite sure that our just principles and our government would demonstrate our true purposes and aspirations to all the working people better than words.

We proved to be right. We see now that our ideas have won out in Finland and the Ukraine and are winning out on the Don, that they are awakening the working people's class-consciousness and are organising them into a solid alliance. We acted without any diplomatists or the use of the old imperialist methods, but can point to the greatest result: the revolution has won, and those who have won are allied with us in a mighty revolutionary federation. We do not rule by dividing, as ancient Rome's harsh maxim required, but by uniting all the working people with the unbreakable bonds of living interests and a sense of class. This our union, our new state is sounder than power based on violence which keeps artificial state entities hammered together with lies and bayonets in the way the imperialists want them. Thus, no sooner had the Finnish workers and peasants taken power than they sent us their expressions of loyalty to the world proletarian revolution and greetings which reveal unflinching determination to march with us along the path of the International.[166] There is the basis of our federa-

tion and I am profoundly convinced that more and more diverse federations of free nations will group themselves around revolutionary Russia. This federation is invincible and will grow quite freely, without the help of lies or bayonets. The laws and the state system which we are creating over here are the best earnest of its invincibility. You have just heard a reading of the law on the socialisation of land.[167] Isn't it a pledge of the unbreakable unity of the workers and peasants, isn't it a guarantee that in this unity we shall be able to overcome all obstacles on the way to socialism?

I must tell you that these obstacles are tremendous. You can depend on the bourgeoisie to resort to every trick, to stake their all on crushing our unity. They can be expected to make use of liars, provocateurs, traitors, possibly, dupes, but henceforth we have nothing to fear, because we have established our own new state power and because we hold the reins of government. We shall throw the full weight of our power against any counter-revolutionary attempt. But the chief pillar of the new system is the organisational measures we shall be implementing for the sake of socialism. In this respect we are faced with a vast amount of work. You must bear in mind, comrades, that the imperialists, the world's brigands, who had embroiled the nations in war, have disrupted the economic life of the world to its very roots. They have left us an onerous legacy, the work to restore what they had destroyed.

Of course, the working people had no experience in government but that does not scare us. The victorious proletariat looks out on a land that has now become a public good, and it will be quite able to organise the new production and consumption on socialist lines. In the old days, human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation. Of this we are sure, so shall we not dedicate ourselves and work with abandon to fulfil this greatest of all historical tasks? The working people will perform this titanic historical

feat, for in them lie dormant the great forces of revolution, renascence and renovation.

We are no longer alone. In the last few days, momentous events have taken place not only in the Ukraine and the Don area, not only in the realm of our Kaledins and Kerenskys, but in Western Europe as well. You have already heard of the telegrams on the state of the revolution in Germany. The flames of a revolutionary wildfire are leaping higher and higher over the whole of this rotten old world system. It was no pie-in-the-sky theory, no armchair pipe dream that once we had established Soviet power we would induce others to make similar attempts in other countries. For I must repeat that the working people had no other way out of the slaughter. These attempts are now being consolidated as gains of the international revolution. We close this historic Congress of Soviets under the sign of the mounting world revolution, and the time is not far off when the working people of all countries will unite into a single world-wide state and join in a common effort to build a new socialist edifice. The way to this construction runs through the Soviets, as a form of the incipient world revolution. (*Stormy applause.*)

In greeting you I urge you to build this new edifice. You will return to your various places and will bend every effort to organise and consolidate our great victory. (*The delegates rise and greet Comrade Lenin with stormy applause.*)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RED GUARD H.Q.

January 12, 1918

In view of the looming danger of famine in Petrograd, and in accordance with the Council of People's Commissars decision on the inspection of railways in Petrograd and its vicinity to discover any possible carloads of grain in the yards, the Red Guard H.Q. is hereby ordered to help carry out such inspection and apprehend profiteers and saboteurs.

With this aim in view, the required number of detachments must be immediately formed and dispatched tomorrow morning, January 13, to Comrade Nevsky or his Deputy at the Commissariat for Railway Affairs, to conduct the following joint operations with him:

(1) make a round of the stations and get their chiefs and other administrative personnel to sign written statements that there is not a single carload of grain or food stuffs (at the station or on the railway tracks);

(2) to verify that there are actually no carloads of grain, etc.; the check-up to be conducted jointly with railwaymen;

(3) in the event of false evidence or misleading reports, administrative personnel (by agreement with railway men's committees) should be arrested and handed over to revolutionary tribunals.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*),
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

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EXTRAORDINARY ALL-RUSSIA RAILWAYMEN'S CONGRESS JANUARY 5-30 (JANUARY 18-FEBRUARY 12), 1918[168]

1
REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS JANUARY 13 (26)

Comrades, I am unfortunately unable to report on all points and hope that those of you who take a closer interest in the state of affairs have got a full and accurate picture of the present p(,sition of Soviet power, its attitude to other institutions and the tasks now facing it, partly from newspaper reports and partly from personal impressions at the Congress of Soviets. Allow me, therefore, to confine myself to a few brief additional remarks. In order to characterise the tasks and position of Soviet power, I must tell you of its attitude to the organisation of the railway proletariat, the railway workers.

Comrades, you are aware that Soviet power clashed with the Constituent Assembly and that all the propertied classes —the landowners, the bourgeoisie, the Kaledinites and their supporters—are now berating us for having dissolved it. But the louder these complaints in the few bourgeois papers, the louder is the voice of the workers, the soldiers, the working and exploited people. The peasants say that they have never doubted that Soviet power was head and shoulders above any other power, and that the workers, soldiers and peasants would never let any institution take over from their own Soviets, which they had elected, and set up and which they control and verify. You are well aware that Soviet power clashed with the Constituent Assembly mainly because it had been elected on lists drawn up before

the October Revolution. The Constituent Assembly was elected on the basis of proportional representation through universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot. That is the most perfect electoral system but it can be a correct expression of the people's will only on one condition, namely, that the parties which under that system alone have the right and possibility of drawing up electoral lists are truly representative of the mood, the wishes, the interests and the will of the groups of population electing them, because under another electoral system, when individual candidates or deputies are each elected by a separate district, the people, depending on their mood or any political changes, can very easily correct their mistakes. Under the system of proportional representation, the lists had to be drawn up by each party as a whole long before the elections actually took place; this explains how it came about that the parties had to draw up their lists back in September and early October for a Constituent Assembly that was to have met on November 12. You all remember that there was a statutory period within which all the parties had to submit their lists, and that no changes were allowed after that. That is how it came about that Russia's biggest party—the one that was undoubtedly the biggest that summer and autumn, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party—had to present its lists by the beginning of October 1917 on behalf of the whole Socialist-Revolutionary Party. That is what actually took place. The lists of candidates were presented in early October, including that of the Socialigt-Revolutionary Party, as if such a party continued to exist as an entity. It turned out that the conciliation with Kerensky came to an end after the list had been drawn up, after the Russian workers and peasants had travelled a long, hard and strenuous way in setting up their Soviets. After all, Kerensky was also regarded as a Socialist-Revolutionary—he was believed to be both a socialist and a revolutionary—although in actual fact he was an imperialist who hid in his pocket secret treaties with the French and British imperialists, the very same treaties that had been concluded by the tsar, who was deposed in February, the very game treatieg which doomed the Russian people to participation in the bloodbath over whether or not the Russian capitalists would seize Constantinople, the Darda-

nelles and Armenia or a piece of Galicia; some who really let themselves go, like the famous Milyukov, made maps, well in advance, showing the strip of Eastern Prussia which was to be the Russian people's own reward for the blood shed by millions of its workers and soldiers. There you have a true picture of the dominant Russian bourgeois-imperialist republic of Kerensky, who continued to be regarded as, and in fact was, a member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies met in late October, by which time the people were fed up with placating the imperialists, and the June offensive had cost us hundreds of thousands of lives, and had clearly shown why the war was dragging on, how these secret treaties doomed the soldiers to the slaughter, and why talk of peace remained nothing but talk. That was why the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets overthrew the rule of the bourgeois-imperialist government and established Soviet power. The elections to the Constituent Assembly fell on November 12 and confronted the workers, soldiers and especially the peasants with a situation in which they had to vote on the old lists, because there were no others, and none could be drawn up. So when we are now told, "You have dissolved the Constituent Assembly which represents the majority of the people", when this is chorused by bourgeois penpushers and newspapers of the Kerensky-socialist stamp, we respond: "Why is it that you cannot make a single straightforward statement to the people about the argument which I have just set forth and which was contained in the decree dissolving the Constituent Assembly?" We cannot consider the Constituent Assembly to be expressive of the people's will because it was elected on old lists. The workers and especially the peasants voted for the Socialist-Revolutionaries as a whole party, but it split after the elections, and appeared before the people as two parties: the Right-wingers, who sided with the bourgeoisie, and the party of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who sided with the working class and the working people, and came down on the side of socialism. Did the people have any chance to choose between the Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries under the Constituent As-

sembly? No, they did not, and so we say that, even from this formal standpoint of the lists and the election, no one can refute our assertion that the Constituent Assembly was unable to give a correct expression to the people's will. The revolution is not to blame for having come after the lists had been drawn up and before the elections to the Constituent Assembly had been held; the revolution is not to blame that the Socialist-Revolutionary Party had kept the people, especially the peasants, in the dark and misled them with talk for so long; that only after October 25, when the Second Peasants' Congress was convened, we saw that there could be no reconciliation between the Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, and it was then that there came a series of congresses, starting with the soldiers' and peasants' and ending with the railwaymen's congress.

Everywhere we found the same picture: everywhere there was, on the one hand, the vast majority of those who truly belonged to the working and exploited people, and came down fully, unconditionally and irrevocably on the side of Soviet power, and on the other, the top layers of the bourgeoisie, the civil servants, the executives, the rich peasants, all of whom sided with the propertied classes and the bourgeoisie, and put out the slogan: "All power to the Constituent Assembly", the assembly that was elected before the revolution, when the people had no way of distinguishing between Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. No, indeed, the revolution of the working classes comes first and not the old lists; the interests of the working and exploited people who were oppressed before the revolution are paramount. If the Constituent Assembly goes against the will of Soviet power, the will of a clear majority of the working people, we say: Down with the Constituent Assembly, and long live Soviet power. (*Applause.*) Comrades, it is our daily experience that Soviet power is meeting with ever greater support from the poor, the working and exploited people in every branch of the economy and in every part of the country, and no matter how we may be slandered by bourgeois and by "socialist" newspapers, like those of Kerensky's party, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, no matter how they may lie that our power is against the people and does not have their support, they will still be

patently lying. We got some very strong confirmation of this just today. It was a report from the Don area (a night telegram) about a congress held by a section of the Cossacks in Voronezh, and a congress of 20 Cossack regiments and 5 batteries in Kamenskaya village. The Cossacks at the front convened their own congress because they saw that Kaledin was rallying officers, cadets and landowners' sons who do not want the Soviets to take power in Russia and want the Don to have self-determination. A party is being formed there around Kaledin, who styles himself the great chieftain. And so the congress of the front-line Cossacks had to be dispersed.[169] The Cossacks countered by, firstly, uniting with the Voronezh Congress, and secondly, by declaring war on Kaledin, thirdly, arresting the Cossack atamans, and fourthly, occupying all the main stations.

Let the Ryabushinskys, who sent millions abroad and donated millions over here to pay the saboteurs for obstructing Soviet power, let the Ryabushinskys, and the capitalists of France and Britain, together with the king of Rumania, let them all bewail their fate; their last stake has been lost even in the Don area, where there were the greatest number of rich peasants who lived on hired labour, who exploited the labour of others, and carried on a constant struggle against the migrant labourers driven to those parts from afar by privation; even there, where exploiter-peasants were most numerous, the people resent this organisation of cadets, officers and property-owners who have decided to oppose Soviet power. Even there we find the same division which everyone ignores and for which the blame is being put on us. "The Bolsheviks have declared civil war." Is it po~-sible that we have invented Kaledin; is it possible that the Bolsheviks have invented Ryabushinsky? We all know that they were the mainstay of the tsarist regime, and are now merely lying in wait, biding their time to turn the Russian Republic into the kind of bourgeois republic that you have in most countries where, with all the liberty and representation, the working people are oppressed just as much as, if not more than, in any monarchy. When we hear it said that the Bolsheviks are kindling a fratricidal war, a civil war, when curses are heaped on the Bolsheviks for having brought about the criminal fratricidal civil war, we reply:

"What kind of fratricidal war is this? Are the Ryabushinskys and Kaledins the working people's brothers? It is strange that the sailors, the soldiers, the workers and the peasants had no inkling of this; it is strange that they had never noticed this before; and it is strange that they firmly demand that the Ryabushinskys and Kaledins submit to Soviet power."

The absurd, madcap attempt on the part of the cadets and officers to stage an uprising in Petrograd and Moscow fizzled out because the vast majority of the workers and soldiers are clearly on the side of Soviet power. They were aware that if they started a war, the soldiers would be armed and would not give up their arms to anyone. The people rallied to take their destiny into their own hands, and that was why they started the revolution. They were very well aware that over here, in Petrograd, the people were solidly behind Soviet power, and so when they were routed both in Petrograd and Moscow they rushed to the Don area to engineer a counter-revolutionary plot against the working people over there, hoping to get support from the bourgeois Rada in Kiev, which is on its last legs because it no longer commands confidence. Having declared civil war on the working people everywhere, they accused us of starting it. They said: You are fostering civil war, down with civil war. We replied: Down with the Ryabushinskys and Kaledins and all their accomplices. (*Applause.*)

That is why, comrades, we say it is not true that we are destroying democracy as the bourgeoisie's grave charge and assertion runs; nor is it true that we have destroyed faith in the forms of democracy, in the cherished democratic institutions which have for so long supported and fed the revolutionary movement in Russia; it is not true that we have destroyed the highest form of democracy, the Constituent Assembly. Under the republic of the socialist Kerensky—a republic of the imperialist chieftains, the chieftains of the bourgeoisie with secret treaties in thier pockets, driving the soldiers to war (and calling it a just war)—the Constituent Assembly was naturally preferable to the Pre-parliament, in which Kerensky, by agreement with Chernov and Tsereteli, conducted the same policy. We have been openly and straightforwardly gaying from the very start of

the revolution—April 1917—that the Soviets were a much higher, a very much more perfect and purposeful form of democracy—a working people's democracy—than the Constituent Assembly.* The Constituent Assembly unites all classes, which means also the exploiter classes, the propertied classes, hence, the bourgeoisie and those who received their education at the expense of the people, at the expense of the exploited, and abandoned the people to join the capitalists, turning their knowledge, the greatest achievements of knowledge, into a tool for oppressing the people, and fighting the working classes. For our part we declare that when a revolution of the working and exploited classes breaks out, all power in the state goes to their organisation. This form of democracy is incomparably higher than the old one. No party invented the Soviets. You know very well that no party could have invented them. They were brought to life by the 1905 revolution. And although at that time the Soviets were short-lived, it was clear that they were the people's only reliable bulwark in the struggle against the autocracy. Whenever the Soviets declined and gave way to some national representative institutions—as all these Dumas, congresses and assemblies have shown—the Constitutional-Democrats, the capitalists and exploiters came to the fore, deals were made with the tsar, the organs of the people's movement declined and the revolution collapsed. That is why when the 1917 Revolution did not merely revive the Soviets but extended a network of them across the country, they taught the workers, soldiers and peasants that they could and should take all state power into their own hands, not as in bourgeois parliaments, where every citizen has the same rights as the next man. Life will not be sweeter for the poor if the worker proclaims that he is the equal of Ryabushinsky, and the peasant the equal of a man who owns 12,000 dessiatines of land. That is why the best form of democracy, the best democratic republic is power without the landowners and the rich.

The Russian people gained a great deal of experience much faster and came to a decision in a matter of months because of the war. the unprecedented dislocation, the fam-

* See present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 21-26.—*Ed.*

ine, the danger of extinction, the physical destruction of millions of people. From April 20 on, when the wounded Linde marched his soldiers out into a street in Petrograd to overthrow the government of Milyukov and Guch1sov, through the long period of ministerial leapfrogging, when all the parties kowtowed the Constitutional-Democrats and vied with each other in displaying loud and alluring programmes, the people saw for themselves that it was no use at all: they had been promised peace, but were in fact driven into an offensive. In June 1917, tens of thousands of soldiers died because of this secret treaty between the tsar and the European imperialists, which Kerensky honoured. It was not propaganda but this first-hand experience that helped the people to make a comparison between the socialist power of the Soviets and the bourgeois republic. They carried away the conviction that there was nothing in the old reforms and the old institutions of bourgeois imperialism for the working and exploited people, and that only the power of the Soviets was good enough for them. The people—and this includes workers, soldiers, peasants and railwaymen, in fact, all working people—are free to elect their own deputies to the Soviets and are free to recall them when they do not satisfy the people's demands and wishes. You don't sit in a Soviet to interpret laws or make brilliant parliamentary speeches but to implement the freedoms and throw off the yoke of exploitation. The workers, on their own, will build their state on new lines; they will build a new life in the new Russia without any room for exploiters. That is what produced the Soviets, and that is why we say that the experience of the Russian revolution showed the people and went to confirm something we had said long ago, namely, that Soviet power is a much higher form of democracy than any bourgeois republic that has taken shape in Western Europe; in a real democracy, the working classes can and must control the non-working elements, the exploiting section of society; workers, soldiers, peasants and railwaymen can be their own masters; they can arrange an exchange of goods between towns and villages, and set a fair wage, without the capitalists and landowners.

That is why the Soviet Republic in Russia has now taken the shape of a fully socialist republic which has taken

away the land from the landowners, established workers' control in industry, and put the banks in the hands of socialist workers' organisations, giving the people access to the immense wealth accumulated and stockpiled by the capitalists to manage and use for the greater welfare and cultural growth of all the working people and not for their oppression. That is the task facing the Soviet Republic. And this is why we have so much sympathy among the people, the working classes abroad, in spite of the military censorship of the tsars, and the harassment of socialist newspapers by the Kerenskys abroad. The bourgeois newspapers over there tell lies about this country in a most shameful fashion; our newspapers are suppressed: not a single issue of *Pravda* has been allowed to go through. A few days ago a friend of mine returned from Switzerland, from that part of the country where I recently spent so many miserable days, and he said that people in free Switzerland were not aware of the fact that the free republics of free Europe were not letting through any issues of our paper, that they read only the wholesale lies circulated by the bourgeois newspapers, which do nothing but rail at the Bolsheviks. Yet the workers in all countries have understood that Soviet power in Russia is truly a working people's government. You will not find a single worker in Europe today—either in Britain, France, Germany or any other country—who does not applaud news of the Russian revolution, because they all regard it with hope and see it as a torch that will light the flame all over Europe.

The Russian revolution was such a simple affair only because Russia had been under the most savage oppression of tsarism and because no other country had been torn and tortured by the war as she had been.

The Russian people were the first to raise the torch of the socialist revolution, but they are aware that they are not alone in their struggle and that they will accomplish their task with the help of the most loyal comrades and friends. We don't know how long it will take for the socialist revolution to break out in the other countries—it may take a long time. You know how revolutions generally take place in other countries. Everyone here has been through 1917, and you all know that three months before the revolution

started, no one knew that it was coming. We know that workers' strikes have already spread to Austria. When the European parties headed by their local Chernovs and Tseretelis began to lose control of events and felt they had lost all touch, there was talk of martial law there, and o£ military dictatorship, in Germany; the strikes in Vienna have now been stopped and the papers are out again. I have received a telegram from our Stockholm representative, Vorovsky, and he says that the movement has undoubtedly halted but that it is impossible to crush it altogether, and that it would go on. There you have one of the results of the fact that the peace negotiations have opened at Brest and that we have kept our promise. The secret treaties have been abrogated, published and exposed to public shame. We have shown that we regard these commitments of the old capitalists—whether they are known as secret treaties or loans—as mere scraps of paper to be swept aside because they hamper us, the working masses, in our construction of socialist society. The working masses are beginning to realise the impudence of the German demands at Brest, which revealed the same plunderous and predacious urge behind a screen of promises to accept a just peace. The delay is artificial, and the masses are clear on this: they say that the war can be stopped, because the Russian workers and peasants have stopped it, and that an offensive can be started against the governments. On October 17, 1905, the first great nationwide strike was suppressed by the autocracy, but it sparked off a chain of events and workers' demonstrations in Austria, in Vienna and Prague, and that was when the Austrians won their universal suffrage. Although the Russian revolution of 1905 was crushed by tsarism, it gave hope to the West-European workers of great reforms in the future, that is, the very events now taking place.

When the Third Congress of Soviets opened, you all saw a number of delegates from foreign parties who said in one voice that from their observation of the working-class movement in Britain, Switzerland and America they drew the conclusion that the socialist revolution in Europe was becoming a task of the day. The bourgeoisie over there is stronger and cleverer than our Kerenskys; it has managed to get organised to make the uprising of the masses more difficult.

Over there the workers have a measure of prosperity, which is why it is more difficult to shake up the old socialist parties which had been there for decades, had come to power, and had acquired authority in the eyes of the people. But that kind of authority is already running out, the masses are surging, and there is no doubt at all that in the near—or possibly more remote—future, the socialist revolution will be on the order of the day in all countries, because the oppression of capital is at an end.

When we are told that the Bolsheviks have invented this utopian idea of introducing socialism in Russia, which is an impossible thing, we reply: How did it happen that utopians and dreamers enjoy the sympathy of the majority of the workers, peasants and soldiers? Did not the majority of the workers, peasants and soldiers side with us because they had acquired a first-hand knowledge of the war and its effects? They realised that there was no way out of the old society, that the capitalists with all their marvels of technology and culture were engaged in a destructive war, and that men had degenerated to a state of frenzy, savagery and starvation. That is what the capitalists have done, and that is why we are faced with the alternative of perishing or demolishing the old bourgeois society. That explains why our revolution has depth. That is why we find that in tiny neighbouring Estland, where the people are literate, there was recently a congress of farm-hands who elected agents to take control of all the efficient farms. This is a world-shaking development: farms are controlled by farm-hands who had always been at the very bottom of the social scale in the capitalist economy. Then take Finland, where the Diet spoke on behalf of the nation, and the bourgeoisie demanded that we should recognise her independence. We were not going to use force to keep under Russia's control or in one Russian state any of the nations tsarism had kept in by oppression. We had not planned to attract other nations—the Ukraine or Finland—by force or imposition but by allowing them to set up their own socialist system, their own Soviet republics. We now find that a working-class revolution is expected to break out in Finland almost any day. This is the same Finland that had enjoyed complete internal freedom for 12 years—since 1905—and had the right to elect democratic

institutions. Between 1905 and 1917, the sparks of the fire which the Bolsheviks are alleged to have fanned artificially, also penetrated into that country which is distinguished for its high culture, its efficient economy and its history, and we find the socialist revolution beginning there as.well. This proves that we are not blinded by party struggles, that we had not acted according to plan, and that it was nothing but mankind's hopeless state since the war began that brought on the revolution, and made the socialist revoiution invincible.

Comrades, let me point out in conclusion that the same thing has happened at this railwaymen's congress. We saw your hard fight against your top-drawer railway organisations. You railwaymen have seen for yourselves that the mass of working railway proletarians bore the brunt of the effort to get the railways running. Things did not come to such a pass by pure chance: either they had been deliberately hampered by the bourgeoisie, bribed by the millionaires who threw in hundreds of thousands of rubles and were prepared to go to any length to destroy Soviet power, or had been caused by the bourgeoisie's refusal to change the system, because it held that that was how God had ordained all things—there have always been masters and servants, and the rich have always abused the poor who worked for them. In effect the railway officials thought that such a state of affairs had been ordained by God, which meant there could be no other system, and that chaos would result from any attempt to change it. But that did not happen. The unity of the working masses is paramount; they will establish their own discipline of equals and, using the technical and cultural achievements, make the railways run like clockwork, and carry on the exchange of goods between town and country to help the workers and peasants organise the economy on a Russia-wide scale and enable the working masses to make use of the products of their labour without the capitalists and landowners. When this is done scientific and technical knowledge will no longer help a handful of men to get rich and stuff their money-bags, but will help to improve the operation of the railway system as a whole. This is of especial importance to us. You know how much corruption, swindling and speculation there is at each junction; you

also know that the exploiters are spending millions to disrupt transportation and get cars into places where they cannot be found. All this is being done to aggravate the famine and incite the people against Soviet power. But you all know that if the majority of railway organisations unite and set themselves the task of supporting Soviet power, all the swindlers, saboteurs, capitalists and exploiters—all these remnants of bourgeois society will be ruthlessly swept away. Only then will it be possible to organise the railways in a proper manner and achieve the complete liberation of the workers, soldiers and peasants from the power of the oppressors. Only then we shall have socialism. (*The entire audience joins in stormy applause.*)

2
REPLIES TO NOTES

Comrades, the notes lying before me fall into two groups: one raises the question of the Constituent Assembly, the other, of the famine and the economic chaos. I shall reply on these two points, putting those notes together that more or less refer to the same topic. About the Constituent Assembly we are being asked: Was it fair to dissolve it, and shouldn't another one be convened? Or wouldn't it have been more correct to refer the question to a popular referendum before dissolving the Constituent Assembly? No, comrades, neither a referendum nor a new constituent assembly can help matters. That is how the parties in Russia have taken shape. We have seen where the sympathies of the capitalists, and where those of the workers and peasants lie. Soviet power was not established by decree or party resolution, because it is above parties, and is the outcome of revolutionary experience, the experience of millions of men: it was no accident at all that the Soviets first emerged in 1905, and in 1917 grew to full stature and established a new republic, the likes of which do not exist in any European country, and will not exist in any of them so long as they are ruled by capital. But the Soviet Republic will triumph everywhere, and that is when the decisive blow will be dealt at capital. I must point out that the Constituent Assembly and the referendum are based on the old bourgeois parliamentary pattern and because capital holds sway, any popular poll has to reckon and bargain with it. Soviet power does not produce men who fence in parliament and exchange brilliant speeches, the while consolidating the rule of capital and the bureaucracy. Soviet power springs from the working

masses themselves; it does not produce a parliament, but an assembly of working people's representatives who enact laws which are implemented immediately, are translated into life and are aimed at fighting the exploiters. The old-type constituent assembly and referendum were designed to unite the will of the whole nation and create the possibility of the sheep living side by side with the wolves, the exploited with the exploiters. That is something we don't want. It is something we have tried out and gone through. We've had enough. And we are sure that the majority of the workers, peasants and soldiers feel that way too. At a time when the war has forced us to make a series of heroic efforts to escape the grip of capital or perish in the attempt, we are invited to put on an experiment which had already been tried out in some European countries, and which would give us the old bourgeois capitalism and national representation, instead of the representation of the working masses. We do not want bourgeois representation but the representation of the exploited and the oppressed that would wage a ruthless fight against the exploiters. That is the intention of Sovie~ power, which does not include either parliament or referendum. It is superior to both, because if the working people are dissatisfied with their party they can elect other delegates, hand power to another party and change the government without any revolution at all, for their experience of Kerensky-Kaledin and the bourgeois Rada has shown that it is impossible to fight against Soviet power. There might be a handful of men in Russia today fighting against Soviet power, but such eccentrics are few, and they will disappear in a matter of weeks, while Soviet power will triumph as an organisation of the oppressed class for the ovarthrow of the oppressors and removal of the exploiters.

I now come to the famine, this horrible curse of our time which threatens us. What is the main cause of the chaos? The main cause of the chaos which threatens the towns and industrial areas with famine is the sway of saboteurs, and the economic chaos these saboteurs keep stirring up, while blaming it on us. We are very well aware that there is enough grain in Russia and that it is stored in Kaledin's realm, in far-away Siberia and in the grain producing gubernias. I must say that the exploited classes will never

succeed in liberating themselves unless they set up a firm, ruthless and revolutionary government. About the saboteurs, let me say, comrades, that we know the addresses at which sabotaging civil servants called to collect and sign for a three-month advance on their salaries, to which Ryabushinsky had contributed 5 million, the Anglo-French imperialists so much, and the Rumanian, so much. Here is what sabotage means: it means people, senior officials, who are bribed and whose only purpose is to overthrow Soviet power, although many of them are not aware of this. Sabotage is the effort to restore the old paradise for the exploiters and the old hell for the working people. But if we are to frustrate them in this purpose, we must break down their resistance.

Railwaymen's pay is another point that has been brought to our notice. This is nothing but a misunderstanding. It may have been that one commissar took this view of the affair and issued a decree but amended it[170] as soon as he received instructions from the Council of People's Commissars, so that anyone who says that that had been the Soviet Government's intention doesn't know what he is talking about.

What are we to do to eliminate the famine and the chaos? Firstly, the capitalists' resistance must be broken, and the saboteurs driven to the wall. When the supporters of *Novaya Zhizn* and other ostensibly socialist periodicals say that sabotage has not been stopped in these ten weeks, I say: why don't you help us stop it? The banks have now passed under the authority of the Soviets. Here is what happened yesterday: a certain specialist writer by the name of Finn-Yenotayevsky came to see me on behalf of 50,000 persons and declared that the banks were prepared to operate entirely under the authority of Soviet power. (*Loud applause.*) "High time, too," I said to this spokesman of the bank officials. We will not refuse to negotiate with any organisation, be it an organisation of bank officials or any other, provided such recognition of Soviet power is actually accepted by the majority of the working people. That is what we were told by the bank officials who are in the habit of putting through unheard-of speculative deals to turn an honest penny, all of which keeps their pockets bulging with profits running into millions of rubles.

Now they want to negotiate with us, but these negotiations will differ from those of Kerensky. We shall not discuss any reform of banking. After occupying the banks with armed force, we enter into negotiations and issue orders and instructions. It is important for us to break down the resistance of the saboteurs before opening negotiations. That is the way to fight the famine and the chaos, and this alone can help us to overcome the horrors of capitalism and anarchy. You know of the terrible chaos that has spread everywhere in the world, especially in Russia, where tsarism has left a legacy of graft, violence, hatred and humiliation of the working people. This is followed by complaints about chaos; I put it to you: can the war-weary men who have stood in the trenches for three years fight to increase the profits of the Russian capitalists and capture Constantinople for them? On every hand they see that millions are being spent to overthrow Soviet power and get the country under control.

Comrades, such changes cannot be expected to take place overnight. The socialist revolution is on, and everything now depends on the establishment of a discipline of equals, the discipline of the working masses themselves, which must take the place of capitalist barrack-room discipline. When the railway workers take power into their own hands, they will wipe out sabotage and speculation through their armed organisation, and set themselves the task of prosecuting those who engage in graft and disrupt railway traffic. Such people should be prosecuted as arch-criminals, fighting against the people's power. It is on such a well-knit, vigorous organisation—a Soviet organisation—that the fight against the capitalists, the saboteurs, the swindlers and the Ryabushinskys depends. That is the way to defeat the famine, because Russia has everything she needs: iron, oil and grain, in short, everything it takes to have a decent life. If we defeat the exploiters, we shall establish Soviet power and economic control in Russia, and that is the way it is going to be. (*Stormy applause.*)

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Published according to the text of the book

MEETING OF PRESIDIUM OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET WITH DELEGATES FROM FOOD SUPPLY ORGANISATIONS JANUARY 14 (27), 1918[171]

1
ON COMBATING THE FAMINE

I

Vladimirov's data indicate that the old ration should not be changed. Measures must be taken to find what there is available in Petrograd.

II

All these data show that the workers of Petrograd are monstrously inactive. The Petrograd workers and soldiers must understand that they have no one to look to but themselves. The facts of abuse are glaring, the speculation, monstrous; but what have the mass of soldiers and workers done about it? You cannot do anything without rousing the masses to action. A plenary meeting of the Soviet must be called to decide on mass searches in Petrograd and the goods stations. To carry out these searches, each factory and company must form contingents, not on a voluntary basis: it must be the duty of everyone to take part in these searches under the threat of being deprived of his bread card. We can't expect to get anywhere unless we resort to terrorism: speculators must be shot on the spot. Moreover, bandits must be dealt with just as resolutely: they must be shot on the spot.

The rich section of the population must be left without bread for three days because they have stocks of other foodstuffs and can afford to pay the speculators the higher price.

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to a handwritten copy
of the Minutes

2
DRAFT RESOLUTION

A plenary meeting of the Petrograd Soviet shall be called to take revolutionary measures to fight speculators and overcome the famine:

(1) All soldiers and workers must be recruited to form several thousand groups (consisting of 10-15 men, and possibly more) who shall be bound to devote a certain number of hours (say, 3-4) daily to the food supply service.

(2) Regiments and factories failing to provide the number of groups required shall be deprived of bread cards, subjected to revolutionary coercive and penal measures.

(3) The groups shall immediately conduct searches, firstly, of railway stations, inspecting and counting cars loaded with grain; secondly, of railway tracks and junctions near Petrograd; thirdly, of all warehouses and private living quarters.

The instructions covering search, counting and requisition shall be worked out by the presidium of the Petrograd Soviet with participation of delegates from the district Soviets or by a special commission.

(4) Speculators who are caught and fully exposed as such shall be shot by the groups on the spot. The same penalty shall be meted out to members of the groups who are exposed as dishonest.

(5) The most reliable and best armed groups of the mass of revolutionary contingents organised to take extreme measures to overcome the famine shall be detailed for dispatch to all stations and all uyezds of the principal grain supplying gubernias. These groups, with the participation of railwaymen delegated by local railway committees, shall be autho-

rised, firstly, to control the movement of grain freights; secondly, take charge of the collection and storage of grain; thirdly, adopt the most extreme revolutionary measures to fight speculators and to requisition grain stocks.

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(6) When making any record of requisition, arrest or execution, the revolutionary contingents shall summon at least six witnesses to be selected from the poorest section of the population closest at hand.

First published in 1924
in the magazine
Krasnaya Letopis No. 1

Published according
to the manuscript

DRAFT DECREE ON THE NATIONALISATION OF THE MERCHANT MARINE AND INLAND WATER TRANSPORT[172]

1
DRAFT DECREE

1. The Council of People's Commissars states that the Central Committee[173] and Tsentrovolga* are entirely in agreement concerning the need to nationalise, immediately and without compensation, all sea-going and river vessels used for commercial purposes.

2. The C.P.C. accordingly resolves that such nationalisation shall be carried out immediately, and authorises a special commission consisting of representatives of the Navy Commissariat, two from the C.C., two from Tsentrovolga, and a chairman appointed by the Supreme Economic Council to work out the following main points of a nationalisation decree and to submit it to the Council of People's Commissars within two days.

3. The nationalisation of the entire fleet is decreed.

4. It is incumbent on the crews and subsequently on the unions of ship workers of each basin and sea to maintain order on board their vessels, safeguard them, etc.

5. The C.C. and Tsentrovolga shall be regarded as caretaker central boards of the nationalised ileet, pending a congress and their merger.

If the merger is not achieved on a voluntary basis, it shall be carried out forcibly by the Soviet Government.

6. The central boards shall operate in full subordination to the local and central organs of Soviet power.

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* The Central Committee of the Volga Fleet.—*Tr.*

2
ADDENDUM TO THE DRAFT

This should be added to the *immediate* decree on nationalisation:

(a) arrest of all boards of management (house arrest),

(b) strict liability for damage to vessels, etc.

Written on January 18 (31), 1918

First published in 1945 in *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECHES AT A MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) JANUARY 19 (FEBRUARY 1), 1918

MINUTES

1

Comrade Lenin asks what kind of conference should be called.[174] He believes we should have it out with the advocates of a revolutionary war, because their remark seems to hint at the charge that one group within the Party suspects the other of being diplomatic on the question of peace. Actually, there is no diplomacy involved at all, because the armistice decision said quite openly that any side wishing to terminate it must announce its intention to do so seven days before the start of hostilities. On that ground we have been marking time with the peace. How was the decision adopted at the Third Congress of Soviets? It was adopted as proposed by the Central Executive Committee, which adopted its decision on the strength of the Party group decision, and the latter adopted it in line with a C.C. resolution. Lenin believes that the best way to dissuade the comrades favouring a revolutionary war would be for them to go to the front and see for themselves that it is quite impossible to conduct the war. Nor does he see any sense in having a conference, because its decisions could not be binding on the Central Committee; in view of this it might be necessary for us to call a Party congress[175] to get precise instructions from the Party. By dragging out the peace talks we are creating an opportunity to continue fraternisation, and by concluding a peace we could at once have an exchange of prisoners of war, thereby sending to Germany a great mass of people who had seen our revolution in action and had been schooled by it. It would be easier for them to work on

the awakening of a revolution in Germany. He believes, in addition, that in order to ascertain exactly what is going on in Germany we should send aviators to Berlin, which, they say, is quite possible.

2

Comrade Lenin, speaking on a point of order, suggests that Bukharin should give the facts on the state of affairs within the Petrograd Committee.

3

Comrade Lenin makes a concrete proposal. He points out to those who want a conference that it would not heal the rift. A Party congress is a necessity, whereas a conference merely elicits opinion in the Party which should be put on record. With that end in view he proposes the convocation of a meeting representing all shades of opinion and standpoints, each by at least three persons. Such a meeting should work out an agreement.

4

Comrade Lenin suggests the meeting should be held within two or three days, without publishing the theses, which should not be made known to Germany. The question of the conference should not be solved before the meeting, but it would be absurd to defer the question of peace until a congress without publishing the theses.

5

Comrade Lenin proposes a meeting of delegates leaving after the Third Congress of Soviets, without, however, anything being handed out in writing.

6

Comrade Lenin says that the Party programme will not be ready by February 15, and proposes that:

the meeting should be held on January 2D, and should be made up as follows: (1) Central Committee; (2) representatives of clearly expressed opinions, namely, Lenin, Sokolnikov, Bukharin, Obolensky, Stukov. If Smirnov, Obolensky, Stukov and Pyatakov differ, they will send two representatives, and otherwise, one; (3) the Petrograd Committee to be represented by Fenigstein; (4) a Latvian.

Bukharin and Lomov should be authorised to talk it over with the Muscovites and with Pyatakov. Each group to present its own theses.[176]

First published: 1 and 6 in 1922 in N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov), *Works*, Vol. XV; 2 and 5 in 1929, in the book, *Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., August 1917-February 1918*

Published according to a handwritten copy of the Minutes

WIRELESS MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO ALL. SPECIAL TO THE PEACE DELEGATION IN BREST-LITOVSK

We are also extremely alarmed that the line[177] is out of order for which, we think, the Germans are to blame. The Kiev Rada has fallen. All power in the Ukraine is in the hands of the Soviet. The Kharkov Central Executive Committee holds undivided sway over the Ukraine; Bolshevik Kotsubinsky has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the troops of the Ukrainian Republic. In Finland, the affairs of the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries are hopeless, and workers' resentment is running extremely high. At a congress in the village of Kamenskaya, the Don area, 46 Cossack regiments proclaimed themselves the government, and are fighting against Kaledin. There is great enthusiasm among Petrograd workers over the formation of a Soviet of Workers' Deputies in Berlin. There are rumours that Karl Liebknecht has been released and will soon head the German Government. Tomorrow's sitting of the Petrograd Soviet will discuss a message to the Berlin and Vienna Soviets of Workers.

Written on January 21
(February 3), 1918

First published in 1929
in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according
to the manuscript

WIRELESS MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO ALL.

Calling Everybody

A number of newspapers abroad have published false reports of horrors and chaos in Petrograd, etc.

All these reports are absolutely untrue. There is complete calm in Petrograd and Moscow. No socialists have been arrested. Kiev is in the hands of the Ukrainian Soviet authorities. The Kiev bourgeois Rada has fallen and dispersed. The authority of the llkrainian Soviet~ Kharkov has been fully recognised. On the Don, 46 Cossack regiments have revolted against Kaledin. Orenburg has been taken by the Soviet authorities and the Cossack ataman, Dutov, has been routed and is in flight. In Finland, the victory of the Finnish workers' government is being rapidly consolidated, the counter-revolutionary whiteguard troops have been pushed back to the North, and the workers' victory over them is certain.

There has been an improvement in the food situation in Petrograd. Today, January 22, 1918, old style, Petrograd workers are sending 10 carloads of food to aid the Finns.

Information about Germany is very scarce. The Germans are clearly concealing the truth about the revolutionary movement in Germany. Trotsky has telegraphed to Petrograd from Brest-Litovsk that the Germans are dragging out the talks. The German bourgeois press, obviously given its cue, is spreading false reports about Russia to intimidate the public.

A decree on the complete separation of church and state and the confiscation of all church property was published yesterday, January 21, 1918.

Written on January 22 (February 4), 1918

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH TO PROPAGANDISTS ON THEIR WAY TO THE PROVINCES JANUARY 23 (FEBRUARY 5), 1918

NEWSPAPER REPORT

Comrades, you all know that Soviet power has been recognised by the majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants of the Russian nation and of other nations which in the old days were part of Russia by compulsion and are now parts of the free Russian Republic. We now have before us a short struggle against the pathetic remnants of Kaledin's counter-revolutionary troops, who, it seems, has to save himself from the revolutionary Cossacks in his home Don area.

Now that the last bastion of the counter-revolution is about to collapse it is safe to say that Soviet power is growing stronger and it will be consolidated. Everyone can understand this, for there is compelling proof that only this power—the workers, soldiers and peasants in their Soviets—can lead Russia to a free working people's community.

We are confronted with two powerful enemies, the first of which is international capital. There it stands raging at the consolidation of Soviet power it hates. There is no doubt that these multi-millionaires must wage war over an extra piece of the pie grabbed from someone else. There is no doubt either that they are as yet stronger than the Soviet Republic.

But it turns out that although the capitalists are stronger than we are, they have already been sending their men to our Commissars, and might even recognise Soviet power and, what is more, our repudiation of the loans, which for these tightwads would really be a most painful and terrible blow. The fact that the agents of the international financial oligarchy have broached the subject shows that the capi-

talists of the world have reached an impasse. They would love to extricate themselves from the war and throw their full force against the hated Soviet Republic, which has started a conflagration all over Europe and America, but they cannot.

Our revolution sprang from the war: but for the war; we would find the capitalists of the world banded and ranged against us. Their only worry is to prevent the sparks of our fire from falling on their roofs. But you can't throw up a Chinese Wall around Russia. We have yet to hear of a workers' organisation anywhere in the world that is not elated at our decrees on land, nationalisation of the banks, etc.

We may be faced with a stiff fight in the future, but you should never forget, comrades, that in most countries the workers, oppressed by their capitalists, are already awakening, and the Kaledinites of all countries, no matter how they rave, will never be able to consolidate their positions, even if they manage to get in a blow at Russia. Upon the other hand, our position is sound because we have the workers of all countries behind us. (*Applause.*)

Chaos is our other enemy. It has to be fought with greater vigour now that the position of the Soviets has become stronger. That struggle, comrades, is one you must promote. Great importance now attaches to your trip, the trip of propagandists from both government parties now at the head of Soviet power. I believe that in the backwoods you will derive a great deal of satisfaction from persistent efforts to build up Soviet power and spread revolutionary ideas in the villages, eliminate the chaos and liberate the toiling peasants from the village kulaks.

We are faced with some very hard work in healing the wounds of war. The bourgeoisie of other European countries had made better preparations than ours did. Over there they had a correct distribution of foodstuffs, which is why they now have it easier; they also had a system of rotating the soldiers at the front. Nothing of the sort had been done by the tsarist regime or by the Kerensky government, which was a vacillating, conciliating bourgeois regime.

That is why Russia now finds herself in such dire straits. To lay the foundation of socialist society on the ruins

she must solve the tasks of organisation and struggle against those who are war-weary and against the criminal elements who play up the chaos for their own benefit.

Comrades, you have before you some very difficult but, as I have said, satisfying work which boils down to getting the rural economy running and building up Soviet power. But you have assistants, for we know that every worker and peasant earning his own livelihood feels, deep down in his heart, that there is no salvation from famine and ruin but in Soviet power. We can save Russia. There is every indication that Russia has the grain, and it would have been available if we had taken stock of it in good time and distributed it fairly. Cast your mind's eye over the boundless expanses of Russia and her disrupted railways and you will realise that we need to tighten up the control and distribution of grain, if this famine is not to be the end of us all. This can be done only on one condition, which is that each worker, each peasant and each citizen must understand that he has no one to look to but himself. Comrades, no one is going to help you. All the bourgeoisie, the civil servants, the saboteurs are against you, for they know that if the people manage to share out among themselves this national wealth which had been in the hands of the capitalists and kulaks, they will rid Russia of the chaff and the drones. That is why they have mustered against the working people all their forces, ranging from Kaledin and Dutov to the saboteurs, the bribed vagrants and those who are simply weary and are habitually unable to put up any resistance because they are mesmerised by the exploiting bourgeoisie. One day they bribe ignorant soldiers to raid wine and spirit warehouses; the next day they get railway officials to hold up freights or shipowners to hold up grain barges, etc., on their way to the capital. But when the people come to realise that organisation alone will bring cohesion and the conscious discipline of equals, they need have no fear of any tricks on the part of the bourgeoisie.

That is the job you have, that is where you must work to unite, organise and establish Soviet power. Out there in the countryside, you will come across "bourgeois" peasants, the kulaks, who will try to upset Soviet power. It will be easy to fight them because the mass will be on your side.

They will see that it is not punitive expeditions but propagandists that are sent from the centre to bring light to the countryside, to unite those in every village who earn their own livelihood and have never lived at the expense of others.

Take the question of land: it has been declared public propert-y and all types of private property are being abolished. This marks a great step towards the elimination of exploitation.

There will be a struggle between the rich and the working peasants, and it is not bookish help that the poor need but experience and actual participation in the struggle. We did not take away the land from the landowners to let the rich peasants and the kulaks get it. It is for the poor. This will win you the sympathies of the poor peasants.

You must see to it that farm implements and machines do not remain in the hands of the kulaks and rich peasants. They must belong to Soviet power and be temporarily allotted to the working peasants for their use, through the volost committees. They themselves must see to it that these machines are not used to enrich the kulaks but to cultivate their own land.

Every peasant will help you in this difficult task. You must explain to the people in the villages that the kulaks and sharks must be pulled up short. There is need for an even distribution of products so that the working people can enjoy the fruits of the people's labour. Ten working people must stand up against every rich man who stretches out his avaricious paw towards public property.

The Soviets have a revenue of 8,000 million and an expenditure of 28,0~0 million. With such a state of affairs we are naturally going to fail, unless we manage to pull the state chariot out of the bog into which the tsarist regime drove it.

The external war is over or nearly so. There is no doubt on that score. It is an internal war that is now before us. The bourgeoisie, its plundered goods hidden in its chests, is not worried and thinks: "We shall sit this out." The people must ferret out the sharks and make them disgorge. This is your task in the localities. If we are not to collapse, we must get at them in their hideouts. It is not the police who must make them disgorge—the police are dead and buried—the

people themselves must do this, and there is no other way of fighting them.

One old Bolshevik gave a correct explanation of Bolshevism to a Cossack.

The Cossack asked him: "Is it true that you Bolsheviks plunder?" "Yes, indeed," said the old man,"we plunder the plunder."[178]

We shall sink in this sea unless we manage to extract from those coffers all that is stored in them, all that has been amassed through plunder over the years of ruthless criminal exploitation.

We in the Central Executive Committee will soon adopt a law on a new tax on the property holders, but it is up to you to put this through in the localities and get the working people to lay their hands on all the hundred ruble notes tucked away since the war. But this should not be done by force of arms: the shooting war is over but this one is ahead of us.

Our revolution will not be overthrown by the force of the exploiters, if we go about this business efficiently, because the world proletariat is on our side.

Pravda No. 18, February 6 (January 24), 1918

Published according to the *Pravda* text

TROTSKY. RUSSIAN PEACE DELEGATION. BREST-LITOVSK

REPLY[179]

January 28, 6.30 p.m.

You know our standpoint; it has lately been confirmed, especially after Ioffe's letter. We repeat: nothing remains of the Kiev Rada, and the Germans will have to recognise this fact, if they have not done so already.

Keep us informed.

Lenin

Written on January 28 (February 10), 1918

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany XI*

Published according to the manuscript

SPEECH AT A MEETING OF THE LAND COMMITTEE CONGRESS AND THE PEASANT SECTION OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF SOVIETS JANUARY 28 (FEBRUARY 10), 1918[180]

NEWSPAPER REPORT

We are now engaged in the great task of consolidating the gains of the working masses, the great task of uniting the workers, soldiers and peasants. At the Peasant Congress where the Rights had a majority I said that if the peasants recognised all our demands we in turn would support all the peasant demands, the chief of which is socialisation of land.* We have now done this. We have passed the world's first law abolishing all private ownership of land. We now have power, the power of the Soviets. This power, brought to the fore by the people themselves, lays a sound foundation for the great cause of world peace. The war has been stopped, and demobilisation has been ordered on every front. There is still the war against the bourgeoisie which is mobilising all its forces to fight Soviet power. We have almost put an end to the Russian counter-revolution. We are gaining the upper hand in almost every battle fought on all the fronts. There is still another enemy; it is international capital; the fight against this enemy will be a long one and we shall win by getting organised and obtaining support for our revolution from the international proletariat. We are still faced with a big fight, the class struggle at home. This is an economic struggle against the bourgeoisie, who, directly or indirectly, support our enemies and who will try to establish economic domination over the working masses.

One thing that we suffer from, that makes our country weak, is the lack of money. The big kulaks in town and country still have lots of money, which is evidence of their

* See present edition, Vol. 24, pp. 486-505.—*Ed.*

exploitation of the people's labour, and which must belong to the people. We are sure that the working peasants will declare a ruthless war against the kulaks, their oppressors, and will help us in our struggle for the people's better future and for socialism.

Published on February 15 (2), 1918
in the newspaper *Izvestia Sovetov Rabochikh, Soldatskikh i Krestyanskikh Deputatov Goroda Moskvy i Moskovskoi Oblasti* No. 25

Published according to the newspaper text

STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MORNING SITTING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) FEBRUARY 18, 1918[181]

MINUTES

1

Item under discussion: German offensive. A. Lomov (G. I. Oppokov) moves a proposal to adjourn the debate.

Comrade Lenin objects, but proposes that a five-minute limit should be set for speakers expressing group opinions.

2

Following a decision to continue the debate, N. I. Bukharin moves that more speakers should be given the floor.

Comrade Lenin objects to this and proposes that the matter should be reduced to the dispatch or non-dispatch of a telegram with an offer of peace, and the pros and cons heard.

Lenin's proposal is adopted.

3

L. D. Trotsky opposes the dispatch of a telegram with an offer of peace.

Comrade Lenin (speaking in favour of a peace offer). Yesterday's vote was especially characteristic, with everyone recognising the need for peace in the event of an offensive but no movement in Germany.[182] There is good cause to believe that the Germans want an offensive in order to overthrow the Soviet Government. We face a situation which calls for action. If an imperialist offensive clearly gets under way, we shall then all be in favour of defence?

and this can be explained to the people. If an offensive gets under way now, and we explain this to the masses later, we shall create more confusion than if we now continue negotiations for an extension of the armistice; there is no time to lose in this because the masses will never understand such an approach. Either we wage a revolutionary war for the socialisation of land, something the masses can understand, or we continue the peace negotiations.

First published:
1 and 2 in 1928, in the magazine *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 2;
3 in 1922, in N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov), *Works*, Vol. XV

Published according to a handwritten copy of the Minutes

SPEECHES AT THE EVENING SITTING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.) FEBRUARY 18, 1918[183]

MINUTES

1

Comrade Lenin. This is a basic question. Uritsky's proposal is amazing. The Central Committee voted against a revolutionary war, but we have neither war nor peace, and are being drawn into a revolutionary war. War is no joke. We are losing railway cars, and our transport is breaking down. We cannot wait any longer because the situation has fully crystallised. The people will not understand this: since there is a war on, there should have been no demobilisation; the Germans will now take everything. This thing has gone so far that continued sitting on the fence will inevitably ruin the revolution. Ioffe wrote from Brest that there was no sign of a revolution in Germany; if that is so the Germans will find their advance very rewarding. We cannot afford to wait, which would mean consigning the Russian revolution to the scrap-heap. If the Germans said that they wanted to overthrow Bolshevik power, we would naturally have to fight; no more procrastination is permissible. It is now no longer a matter of the past but of the present. If we apply to the Germans, all we have is a piece of paper. You can't call that a policy. The only thing we can do is offer the Germans a resumption of the talks. There is no half-way house in this. If it is to be revolutionary war it must be declared, and the demobilisation stopped, but we can't go on in this manner. While we engage in paperwork, they take warehouses and railway cars, leaving us to perish.

The issue now is that while playing with war we have been surrendering the revolution to the Germans.

History will say that you have surrendered the revolution. We could have concluded a peace which held no threat to the revolution. We have nothing, we have not even get the time to blow up anything as we retreat. We have done our best to help the revolution in Finland, but now we can do no more. This is not the time for an exchange of notes, and this temporising must stop. It is too late to put out feelers, because it is quite clear now that the Germans can launch an offensive. We cannot argue against the advocates of a revolutionary war, but we can and must argue against the temporisers. An offer of peace must be made to the Germans.

FROM MARX TO MAO

2

Comrade Lenin. Bukharin failed to notice how he went over to the position of a revolutionary war. The peasants do not want war and will not fight. Can we now tell the peasants to fight a revolutionary war? But if that is what we want we should not have demobilised the army. It is a utopia to want a permanent peasant war. A revolutionary war must not be a mere phrase. If we are not ready, we must conclude peace. Since we have demobilised the army it is ridiculous to talk of a permanent war. There is no comparison at all with a civil war. The muzhik will not have a revolutionary war, and will overthrow anyone who openly calls for one. The revolution in Germany has not yet started, and we know that over here, too, our revolution did not win out all at once. It has been said here that they would take Lifland and Estland; but we can give them up for the sake of the revolution. If they should want us to withdraw our troops from Finland, well and good—let them take revolutionary Finland. The revolution will not be lost if we give up Finland, Lifland and Estland. The prospects with which Comrade Ioffe tried to scare us yesterday do not at all spell ruin to the revolution.

NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

I propose a declaration that we are willing to conclude the peace the Germans offered us yesterday; should they add to this non-interference in the affairs of the Ukraine, Finland, Lifland and Estland, we should unquestionably

accept all that as well. Our soldiers are in a poor state; the Germans want grain, they will take it and go back, making it impossible for Soviet power to continue in existence. To say that the demobilisation has been stopped is to be overthrown.

First published in 1922
in N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov),
Works, Vol. XV

Published according
to a handwritten copy
of the Minutes

DRAFT WIRELESS MESSAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GERMAN REICH[184]

The Council of People's Commissars lodges a protest over the German Government's movement of troops against the Russian Soviet Republic, which had declared the state of war ended and had started to demobilise its army on all fronts. The Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia could not have expected such a step, especially since neither of the parties to the armistice had, directly or indirectly, made any announcement either on February 10, or at any other time, that the armistice was at an end, as both parties to the treaty of December 2 (15), 1917 had undertaken to do.

The Council of People's Commissars finds itself forced, in the situation that has arisen, to declare its readiness formally to conclude peace on the terms the German Government demanded at Brest-Litovsk.

At the same time, the Council of People's Commissars expresses its readiness, if the German Government should formulate its precise peace terms, to reply within 12 hours whether or not these terms are acceptable.

Written on the night of February 18, 1918

Message published on February 19 (6), 1918 in *Pravda* No. 30 (evening edition)

Published according to the manuscript

DIRECT-LINE CONVERSATION WITH THE MOSCOW SOVIET FEBRUARY 20, 1918

At 2.15 p.m. the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Comrade Lenin, was called up by Comrade Feldman, member of the Executive Committee, who, on behalf of the Bolshevik group, asked Comrade Lenin the following:

(1) What happened after the receipt of the telegram from Berlin;

(2) What measures have been taken by the Council of People's Commissars at present;

(3) Whether or not there was any other reply from Berlin apart from Hoffmann's telegram.

To the first question Comrade Lenin replied:

There is no army; the Germans are attacking from Riga along the entire front. They have taken Dvinsk and Rezhitsa and are on their way to Lutsk and Minsk. Those who want to do something—and stop talking—must conclude peace and continue the task of consolidating and extending the revolution at home.

To the second question:

Until the offensives are stopped, an order has been issued to put up resistance wherever possible, and destroy everything, down to the last hunk of bread, all along the way.

To the third question:

No, there was none.

Published on February 21 (8), 1918 in the newspaper *Izvestia Sovetov Rabochikh, Soldatskikh i Krestyanskikh Deputatov Goroda Moskvy i Moskovskoi Oblasti* No. 29

Published according to the newspaper text

NOTES

[1] The letters on pp. 19-21 and 22-27 were discussed by the Central Committee on September 15 (28), 1917, which decided to call a meeting shortly to discuss tactics. The following question was put to the vote: preservation of only one copy of Lenin's letters. The vote was 6 in favour, four against and six abstentions. Kamenev, an opponent of the Party's course towards a socialist revolution, motioned a resolution aimed against Lenin's proposals to organise an armed uprising. Kamenev's motion was defeated. p. 19

[2] *May 6*: announcement of the first coalition Provisional Government; *August 31*: the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies passed a Bolshevik resolution calling for the establishment of a Soviet Government; *September 12*: the date set by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, both dominated by Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, for the convocation of a Democratic Conference. The Democratic Conference took place in Petrograd, September 14-22 (September 27-October 5), 1917. For details see pp. 43-51 and 52-58 of this volume. p. 19

[3] *Socialist-Revolutionaries*—a petty-bourgeois party founded in late 1901 and early 1902 through the merger of various Narodnik groups and circles (League of Socialist-Revolutionaries, Socialist-Revolutionary Party, etc.) which professed a hotch-potch of Narodnik and revisionist ideas. During the First World War, most of its members held social-chauvinist views.

After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, together with the Mensheviks, were the mainstay of the bourgeois-landowner Provisional Government, and the Party's leaders (Avksentyev, Kerensky and Chernov) were in the Cabinet. The Party refused to support the peasant demand for the abolition of landed estates and favoured the preservation of large holdings; its ministers in the Provisional Government sent

punitive expeditions against peasants who seized tracts of large estates.

At the end of November 1917, the Left wing formed a separate party, which, in an effort to retain its influence among the peasants, went through the motions of recognising Soviet power and entered into an agreement with the Bolsheviks. Very soon, however, they began to fight against Soviet power.

During the foreign armed intervention and Civil War the Socialist-Revolutionaries engaged in subversion and gave active support to the interventionists and whiteguards; they took part in counter-revolutionary plots, and staged terroristic acts against Soviet Government and Communist Party leaders. After the Civil War, they continued to engage in their hostile activity at home and among the whiteguard émigrés abroad. p. 19

[4] *The All-Russia Democratic Conference* was called by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, which was dominated by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, to decide on the question of state power, but its actual purpose was to switch the attention of the masses away from the mounting revolutionary movement. It was first set for September 12 (25), and later postponed to September 14-22 (September 27-October 5), 1917, when it was held in Petrograd and attended by more than 1,500 delegates. The Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders did their utmost to reduce the number of workers' and peasants' delegates and increase those of various petty-bourgeois and bourgeois groups, thereby securing a majority.

The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) met on September 3 (16) and decided to take part. It circulated a letter among local Party organisations instructing them to "do their utmost to build up the largest possible well-knit group of delegates from among our Party members". The Bolsheviks decided to attend in order to expose the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The tactics of the Bolsheviks in respect of the Democratic Conference were outlined by Lenin in two of his letters (see pp. 19-21 and 22-27.

The Democratic Conference adopted a resolution on the establishment of a Pre-parliament (Caretaker Council of the Republic), which was an attempt to create the impression that Russia now had a parliamentary system. Actually, according to the Provisional Government's ordinance, the Pre-parliament was to be a consultative body under the Government.

A meeting of the Bolshevik delegates to the Democratic Conference called by the Central Committee decided, by a vote of 77 to 50, to take part in the Pre-parliament.

In the articles on pp. 43-51, 52-58 and 74-85, Lenin had some criticism to make of the Bolshevik tactics in respect of the Democratic Conference; he flatly demanded that the Bolsheviks should withdraw from the Pre-parliament and concentrate on preparing for the insurrection. The Central Committee debated Lenin's proposal

and adopted a resolution on the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-parliament despite resistance on the part of Kamenev, Rykov and other capitulants. On October 7 (20), the opening day of the Pre-parliament, the Bolsheviks read out a declaration and walked out. p. 19

[5] The Provisional Government announced the convocation of the Constituent Assembly in its declaration of March 2 (15), 1917. On June 14 (27) it adopted a decision setting the election for September 17 (30), but in August postponed the date to November 12 (25).

The election was actually held after the October Socialist Revolution at the appointed time and on party lists drawn up before the revolution, in accordance with a Provisional Government ordinance. At the time of the election the bulk of the people had not yet realised the full implications of the socialist revolution, a fact which the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries used to win a majority in the areas remote from the capital and the industrial centres. The Constituent Assembly was called by the Soviet Government and opened in Petrograd on January 5 (18), 1918. Its counter-revolutionary majority rejected the *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People*, which was placed before it by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, and refused to recognise Soviet power. It was dissolved by a decree of the Central Executive Committee on January 6 (19). For details see pp. 379-83, 434-36, 437-41 of this volume. p. 20

[6] See Engels's *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany* which was published in instalments in the *New York Daily Tribune* in 1851 and 1852. It bore Marx's signature, who had intended to write the work but was too busy with his economic studies and asked Engels to do it. Engels consulted Marx on various points and submitted the articles for his perusal before dispatching them to the paper. The fact that the work was written by Engels came out later with the publication of their correspondence. p. 21

[7] *Blanquism*—a trend within the French socialist movement led by Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881), an outstanding utopian communist. "Blanquism expects that mankind will be emancipated from wage slavery, not by the proletarian class struggle, but through a conspiracy hatched by a small minority of intellectuals" (see present edition, Vol. 10, p. 392). The trend failed to reckon with the concrete situation, which must be taken into account if an insurrection is to succeed, and neglected to establish ties with the masses. p. 22

[8] What Lenin has in mind are the mass demonstrations which took place in Petrograd on July 3-4 (16-17), 1917. It was a movement of soldiers, sailors and workers, who were incensed at the Provisional Government for sending troops into a patently hopeless

offensive which proved a fiasco. It started on July 3 (16) with a demonstration by the First Machine-Gun Regiment in the Vyborg District, and threatened to develop into an armed revolt against the Provisional Government.

The Bolshevik Party was opposed to insurrection at that time because it believed that the revolutionary crisis had not yet come to a head. The Central Committee, meeting at 4.00 p.m. on July 3 (16), decided to refrain from taking action, and a similar decision was adopted by the Second Petrograd City Conference of Bolsheviks which was just then in session. Its delegates went to the factories and the districts to stop the masses from going into action, but the movement had already got underway and nothing could be done to stop it.

Late that night, the Central Committee, together with the Petrograd Committee and the Military Organisation, took account of the mood of the masses and decided to take part in the demonstration to lend it a peaceful and organised character. Lenin was away on a short holiday after an exhausting stretch of work. Being informed of the events, he returned to Petrograd on the morning of July 4 (17) and assumed leadership.

More than 500,000 persons took part in the demonstration on July 4 (17). The demonstrators carried Bolshevik slogans, such as "All Power to the Soviets", and demanded that the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviet should take power. But the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders refused to do so. The Provisional Government, with the knowledge and consent of the Central Executive Committee, which was dominated by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, sent detachments of officer cadets and Cossacks to attack and shoot down the peaceful demonstrators. Counter-revolutionary troops were brought in from the front to disperse the demonstrations.

That night, Lenin presided at a meeting of members of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee, which adopted a decision to stop the demonstrations in an organised manner. This was a wise step, for it helped to save the main revolutionary force from defeat. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries acted in a manner which helped the counter-revolutionaries: they joined the bourgeoisie in attacking the Bolshevik Party. The Bolshevik newspapers, *Pravda*, *Soldatskaya Pravda* (Soldiers' Truth) and others were closed down by the Provisional Government, while the *Trud* Printing House, operated on funds donated by the workers, was destroyed. The workers were disarmed and arrested, and searches and persecution were started. The revolutionary units of the Petrograd garrison were withdrawn from the capital and sent to the front.

After the July events, power in the country passed into the hands of the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government, with the Soviet an impotent appendage. The period of dual power was at an end, and so was the revolution's peaceful stage. The Bolsheviks were faced with the task of preparing an armed insurrection to overthrow the Provisional Government. p. 23

[9] The counter-revolutionary revolt of the bourgeoisie and the landowners in August 1917, which was headed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the tsarist General Kornilov. The plotters planned to take Petrograd, destroy the Bolshevik Party, disperse the Soviets and set up a military dictatorship with a view to restoring the monarchy. Kerensky, the head of the Provisional Government, took part in the plot, but when the revolt got under way he realised that he would be swept away with Kornilov and washed his hands of the whole business: be declared the revolt was aimed against the Provisional Government.

It broke out on August 25 (September 7), with Kornilov sending the Third Cavalry Corps against Petrograd, where counter-revolutionary organisations were itching to go into action.

The mass struggle against Kornilov was led by the Bolshevik Party, which continued, as Lenin demanded, to expose the Provisional Government and its Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik accomplices. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party rallied the workers of Petrograd, and the revolutionary soldiers and sailors to struggle against the mutineers. Petrograd workers swiftly organised Red Guard units and revolutionary committees were set up in several places. The advance of the Kornilov troops was stopped and their morale undermined by Bolshevik agitators.

The Kornilov revolt was crushed by the workers and peasants led by the Bolshevik Party. Under the pressure of the masses, the Provisional Government was forced to order the arrest and prosecution of Kornilov and his accomplices on charges of organising the revolt. p. 23

[10] *Cadets* (Constitutional-Democratic Party)—the leading party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia, set up in October 1905. Its membership was made up of capitalists, landowners serving on local councils and bourgeois intellectuals. Among its more prominent members were P. N. Milyukov, S. A. Muromtsev, V. A. Maklakov, A. I. Shingaryov, and P. B. Struve. The Cadets eventually developed into a party of the imperialist bourgeoisie. During the First World War they actively supported the tsarist government's foreign policy of aggrandisement. During the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917, they tried to save the monarchy; playing a keg part in the bourgeois Provisional Government, they conducted a counter-revolutionary policy opposed to the people's interests.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution they became rabid enemies of Soviet power and took part in all the counter-revolutionary military operations and the campaigns of the interventionists. After the defeat of the interventionists and whiteguards, the Cadets fled abroad to continue their anti-Soviet counter-revolutionary activity. p. 23

[11] *The Alexandrinsky Theatre* in Petrograd was the place where the Democratic Conference was convened.

The Peter and Paul Fortress on the Neva opposite the Winter Palace, served as a state prison for the tsar's political opponents. Now a museum, it had a large arsenal and was strategically situated. p. 27

[12] *The Savage Division*—formed during the First World War from volunteer mountaineers of the North Caucasus. General Kornilov tried to use it as a battering ram in his assault on revolutionary Petrograd. p. 27

[13] *Birzhevka* (*Birzheviye Vedomosti*—Stock Exchange Recorder)—a bourgeois newspaper founded in 1880. Published in Petrograd three, then four times a week, then as a daily, and finally, in 1902 as a daily with two editions. It won notoriety for corruption and lack of principle. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February its editors launched a campaign of incitement against Lenin and the Bolshevik Party. It was closed down by the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet in late October 1917. p. 28

[14] *Rech* (Speech)—a daily, the central organ of the Cadet Party, published in Petersburg from February 23 (March 8), 1906. After the February revolution, it gave active support to the Provisional Government's home and foreign policy, and carried on a vicious campaign against Lenin and the Bolshevik Party. It was closed down by the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet on October 26 (November 8), 1917. It continued to be published until August 1918 under the names of *Nasha Rech*, *Svobodnaya Rech*, *Vek*, *Novaya Rech*, and *Nash Vek*. p. 28

[15] The reference is to the following facts. On April 20 (May 3), the newspapers carried a note from Foreign Minister Milyukov to the Allied Governments in which the Provisional Government reaffirmed its intention to honour all the treaties of the tsarist government and to carry on the war to a victorious end. There was massive indignation over this imperialist policy, and on April 21 (May 4), the workers of Petrograd responded to a call issued by the Bolshevik Party and downed tools. They staged a demonstration which demanded peace and was attended by more than 100,000 workers and soldiers. Protest demonstrations were also staged in Moscow, the Urals, the Ukraine, Kronstadt and other towns and districts. Resolutions protesting against Milyukov's note were received by the Petrograd Soviet from many urban Soviets.

The April demonstration led to a government crisis. Mass pressure forced Milyukov and Guchkov to resign from the Cabinet. The first coalition government was formed on May 5 (18), and consisted of 10 capitalist ministers and leaders of the parties collaborating with them, namely, Kerensky and Chernov from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; Tsereteli and Skobelev from the Mensheviks, etc. The bourgeois government was saved by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks who openly sided with the bourgeoisie. p. 29

[16] *Rabochaya Gazeta* (Workers' Newspaper) published daily by the Mensheviks in Petrograd from March 7 (20) to November 30 (December 13), 1917; from August 30 (September 12) it was the organ of the Menshevik Central Committee. It supported the bourgeois Provisional Government, fought against the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Lenin, and bristled with hostility at the October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power. p. 30

[17] *Dyelo Naroda* (People's Cause)—a daily, the organ of the Socialist-Revolutionaries; published in Petrograd from March 1917 to July 1918, under various names. It took a defencist attitude, collaborated with the capitalists and supported the Provisional Government. It resumed publication in Samara in October 1918 (four issues) and in Moscow in March 1919 (10 issues), and was closed down for counter-revolutionary activity. p. 30

[18] *Proletarskoye Dyelo* (Proletarian Cause)—a daily, the organ of the Bolshevik group of the Kronstadt Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Published in 1917 instead of the *Golos Pravdy* (Voice of Truth), which had been closed down by the Provisional Government in July. p. 30

[19] *Pravda* (Truth)—a legal Bolshevik daily; first issue out in Petersburg on April 22 (May 5), 1912.

Lenin provided *Pravda* with ideological direction, wrote for it almost daily, and issued instructions to its editors to make it a militant revolutionary newspaper.

A considerable part of the Party's organisational effort was carried out in its editorial offices, where members of local Party cells held meetings, information was collected on Party activities at the factories, and Party directives of the Central and Petersburg Committees were issued.

Pravda was constantly harassed by the police and was closed down on July 8 (21), 1914.

It resumed publication after the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917. On March 5 (18), 1917, it became the organ of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

When Lenin returned to Petrograd he became a member of its editorial board and the newspaper launched a campaign for his plan of turning the bourgeois-democratic revolution in a socialist revolution.

Owing to the Provisional Government's persecution, the paper appeared under various names, such as *Listok Pravdy*, *Proletary*, *Rabochy* and *Rabochy Put* between July and October 1917. After the Great October Socialist Revolution, on October 29 (November 9), 1917, the paper continued publication under its original name. p. 32

[20] On June 9 (22), 1917, the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets prohibited the demonstration set by the Bolshevik Central Com-

mittee for June 10 (23). The decision to stage the demonstration was adopted at an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) together with delegates from the districts, army units, trade unions and factory committees. The demonstration was to have shown the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets that the Petrograd workers and soldiers wanted the Soviets to take all state power. The Menshe-viks and Socialist-Revolutionaries decided to prevent the demonstration from taking place and pushed a resolution through the congress to that effect.

The Bolshevik Central Committee did not wish to oppose the Congress decision and at Lenin's suggestion withdrew its decision on the night of June 9 (22). Members of the Central Committee, Petrograd Committee, and Party activists went to the factories and barracks to convince the workers and soldiers to stay in. Their efforts were successful and the workers and soldiers agreed that a demonstration would be badly timed.

The Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leadership of the Congress of Soviets decided to stage a demonstration on June 18 (July 30) as an expression of confidence in the Provisional Government.

Lenin led the Central and Petrograd Committees in a great effort to prepare a demonstration showing the true feelings of the masses. On the eve of the demonstration, June 17 (30), *Pravda* carried an appeal from the Central Committee, the Petrograd Committee, the Central Committee's Military Organisation, and the Central Council of Factory Committees calling on the people to demonstrate the strength of the revolution.

Some 500,000 workers and soldiers took part in the demonstration on June 18 (July 1), with the overwhelming majority carrying the revolutionary slogans of the Bolshevik Party. Only a small group carried the slogans of the collaborating parties, which urged support for the Provisional Government. The demonstration showed the mounting revolutionary activity of the masses and the Bolshevik Party's growing influence, it was a great victory for the Bolshevik Party. It showed that the masses put no trust in the Provisional Government, and the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary policy of collaborating with the bourgeoisie. p. 33

[21] Called by the Provisional Government on August 12 (25), 1917, to rally the forces of the bourgeoisie and landowners. It was a counter-revolutionary affair attended mostly by big businessmen and industrialists, bankers, landowners, and members of the tsarist Duma. The delegates of the Soviets came from the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties. Generals Kornilov, Alekseyev, Kaledin and others put forward a plan to crush the revolution. Kerensky threatened to stamp out the revolutionary movement and use force against peasants who seized tracts of landed estates. The Bolshevik Central Committee called on the proletariat to protest against the Moscow Conference. In Moscow, the Bolsheviks staged a one-day general strike to mark its opening. More than

400,000 workers responded. Protest meetings and strikes were also staged in other cities. p. 33

[22] *Vendée*—a province in France, which was a hotbed of counter-revolution during the French bourgeois revolution at the end of the 18th century. The backward peasants of the Vendée, who were strongly influenced by the Catholic clergy, were a tool in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries in their fight against revolutionary France. p. 33

[23] *Yedinstvo* (Unity)—a daily published in Petrograd from March to November-1917, and also in December 1917 and January 1918 under other names; edited by Plekhanov. It united the extreme Right-wing group of the Menshevik defencists and gave unconditional support for the bourgeois Provisional Government. It waged a vicious fight against the Bolshevik Party. p. 35

[24] *Dyen* (Day)—a bourgeois-liberal daily published in Petersburg from 1912. It had active Menshevik contributors and finally fell into their hands after the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917. It was closed down by the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet on October 26 (November 8), 1917. p. 35

[25] *Buchanan, George William* (1855-1924)—British diplomat and ambassador to Russia (1910-1918). He helped the reactionaries in their anti-revolutionary fight and in August 1917 gave support to Kornilov's counter-revolutionary revolt. p. 37

[26] *Izvestia*—a daily newspaper published from February 28 (March 13), 1917. It was first issued by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Following the formation at the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the paper became the organ of the Executive, and from August 1 (14) (No. 132) was called the *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee and the Petrograd Soviet, and from September 29 (October 12) (No. 184), the *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets. All this time the paper was under the control of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and waged a fierce fight against the Bolshevik Party.

After the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the paper came under a new editorial board and became the official organ of the Soviet power. It carried the first major documents adopted by the Soviet Government, and Lenin's articles and speeches. When the U.S.S.R. came into being in December 1922, the paper became the organ of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. and the All-Russia Executive Committee. It was reorganised under a decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. of January 24, 1938, and since January 26, 1938, has

been known as the organ of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies. p. 41

[27] An abridged version of the article was first published in No. 19 of *Rabochy Put* of October 7 (September 24),1917, under the title "Heroes of Fraud". It did not contain the part of Lenin's article which criticised the mistakes of the Bolsheviks in respect of the Democratic Conference, and also those of Zinoviev and Kamenev. It may have been this Lenin had in mind when in Chapter VI of the article "The Crisis Has Matured", which was circulated among members of the Central Committee, the Petrograd and Moscow Committees and the Soviets, he wrote with indignation that the Central Organ was deleting his statements about "the glaring errors on the part of the Bolsheviks..." (see p. 84 of this volume).

The first, second and third editions of Lenin's *Collected Works* contained the text of the article as it had appeared in *Rabochy Put*, but in the fourth edition it was published in full, according to the manuscript; this translation follows the manuscript. p. 43

[28] *Lieberdans*—an ironical nickname which stuck to the Mensheviks Lieber and Dan and their followers, after Demyan Bedny's feuilleton in *Sotsial-Demokrat* [No. 141 of August 25 (September 7), 1917], under that title. p. 43

[29] On June 3 (16), 1907, the tsar issued a manifesto dissolving the Second State Duma and amending the electoral law. The landowners, industrialists and merchants were given many more seats in the Duma, and the workers and peasants very many less. This was a gross violation of the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, and the Fundamental Law of 1906, which made all Government decrees subject to Duma approval. The Third Duma, which was elected under the new law and met on November 1 (14), 1907, was out-and-out reactionary. p. 46

[30] *Rabochy Put* (The Workers' Path)—the Central Organ of the Bolshevik Party, a daily published from September 3 (16) to October 26 (November 8), 1917 in place of the newspaper *Pravda*, which was closed down by the Provisional Government. On October 27 (November 9), *Pravda* resumed publication under its original name. p. 49

[31] *Sotsial-Demokrat* (Social-Democrat)—a daily, the organ of the Moscow Regional Bureau, and the Moscow Committee, and later, also of the Moscow District Committee of the Bolshevik Party; published from March 1917 to March 1918. When the Soviet Government and the Party's Central Committee moved to Moscow the paper was merged with *Pravda*. p. 49

[32] *Russkaya Volya* (Russia's Freedom)—a bourgeois daily founded by the tsarist Minister of the Interior Protopopov, and subsidised

by the major banks. Published in Petrograd from December 1916. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917, it conducted a slanderous campaign against the Bolsheviks. Lenin said it was "one of the rottenest bourgeois newspapers". Closed down by the Revolutionary Military Committee on October 25 (November 7), 1917. p. 50

[33] *Bulygin Duma*—a consultative "representative institution", which the tsarist government promised to convene in 1905. The draft law on the institution of a consultative Duma and the election law were worked out by a commission chaired by the Minister of the Interior Bulygin, and published on August 6 (19), 1905. The Bolsheviks boycotted the Duma which the Government failed to convoke: it was swept away by the general political strike in October. p. 54

[34] See Note 29. p. 55

[35] *Stolypin, Pyotr Arkadyevich* (1862-1911)—tsarist statesman and big landowner. From 1906 to 1911, Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister of the Interior. His name applies to a period of fierce political reaction in which he tried to shore up the autocratic regime by putting through some reforms from above in the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landowners. p. 55

[36] *Tit Titych*—a merchant from Ostrovsky's comedy *Shouldering Another's Troubles*, personifying the petty tyranny of the rich. p. 56

[37] See Note 2. p. 56

[38] *Izvestia Vserossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov* (News of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies)—a daily, the official organ of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, published in Petrograd from May 9 (22) to December 1917. It expressed the views of the Right wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. It met the October Socialist Revolution with hostility and was closed down for counter-revolutionary propaganda. p. 64

[39] *Russkoye Slovo* (Russian Word)—a daily published in Moscow from 1895 (a pilot issue was published in 1894). Ostensibly independent, it took a moderately liberal attitude in the interests of the Russian bourgeoisie. In 1917, the paper sided with the bourgeois Provisional Government and bitterly attacked Lenin and the Bolshevik Party.

In November 1917, it was closed down for carrying slanderous anti-Soviet reports. From January 1918, it appeared for a time under the name of *Novoye Slovo* (New Word) and *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word). It was finally closed down in July 1918. p. 66

[40] A fortified area on the Finnish border which with Kronstadt protected the approaches to Petrograd. p. 70

[41] The reference is to Deputy of the Finnish Diet K. Vijk, in whose country-house at Mälm station Lenin stayed for a day when on his way to Helsingfors. p. 72

[42] A collection published in 1917 by the Regional Bureau of the Moscow Industrial District of the R.S.D.L.P., consisting of articles by V. Milyutin, V. Sokolnikov, A. Lomov, and V. Smirnov. The foreword said the collection was being published in connection with the forthcoming Party Congress which was to review the programme. In his article "Revision of the Party Programme" (see pp. 149-78) Lenin gave a detailed analysis and criticism of the articles of Sokolnikov and Smirnov. p. 73

[43] Written in Vyborg. It consisted of six chapters, the last not being intended for publication but for circulation among members of the Central Committee, the Petrograd and Moscow Committees and the Soviets. Only the manuscript of the last two chapters has come down to us. The article was first published in four chapters in *Rabochy Put* No. 30 of October 20 (7), 1917; a comparison of the newspaper text and the manuscript shows that one of the chapters was omitted and Chapter V was headed as Chapter IV.

The article was widely carried by Bolshevik periodicals. p. 74

[44] The reference is to the revolutionary action by German sailors in August 1917, who were led by a revolutionary sailors' organisation numbering 4,000 members (late July 1917). It was led by seamen Max Reichpietsch and Albin Köbis of the *Friedrich der Grosse*. The organisation decided to fight for a democratic peace and prepare for an uprising. Manifestations broke out in the navy in early August. Sailors of the warship *Prinzeregent Luitpold*, which was at Wilhelmshaven, took absence without leave to fight for the release of their comrades who had earlier been arrested for staging a strike; on August 16, the firemen of the *Westphalia* refused to work; at the same time the crew of the cruiser *Nürnberg*, which was out at sea, staged an uprising. The sailors' movement spread to the ships of several squadrons at Wilhelmshaven . These manifestations were put down with great savagery. Reichpietsch and Köbis were shot and other active participants were sentenced to long terms of hard labour. p. 74

[45] The reference is to what an officer, Dubasov, said at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on September 21 (October 4), 1917. He had just returned from the front and declared: "Whatever you may say over here, the soldiers will not fight". p. 80

[46] *Russkiye Vedomosti* (Russian Recorder)—a daily published in Moscow from 1863, expressing the views of moderate liberal intellectuals. From 1905 the paper was an organ of the Right wing of the Cadet Party. In 1918, it was closed down at the same time as other counter-revolutionary newspapers. p. 80

[47] The reference is to the nation-wide strike of railwaymen for higher wages. It started on the night of September 23 (October 6), 1917, and threw the Provisional Government into a panic. The bourgeois press attacked the striking railwaymen.

The strike was discussed by the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) on September 24 (October 7), 1917. In an appeal, "Let's Help the Railwaymen", which was published in *Rabochy Put* (The Workers' Path), the Central Committee exposed the counter-revolutionary policy of the Provisional Government and called on the proletariat to express full sympathy for the railwaymen, protect them from the provocative attacks of the counter-revolutionaries and do everything to prevent their strike from being isolated and defeated. The strike ended on the night of September 26 (October 9), 1917, when the Provisional Government satisfied some of the railwaymen's demands. p. 81

[48] The reference is to the attitude of Kamenev, Zinoviev, Trotsky and their followers. Kamenev and Zinoviev opposed Lenin's plan for an armed uprising, declaring that the working class of Russia was incapable of carrying out a socialist revolution. They slid down to the Menshevik position of demanding a bourgeois republic. Trotsky insisted on a postponement of the uprising until the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which meant frustrating the insurrection because this gave the Provisional Government a chance to concentrate its forces on the opening day of the Congress and crush the uprising. p. 82

[49] Written at Vyborg in late September-October 1 (14), 1917. First published in the magazine *Prosveshcheniye* (Education) No. 1-2 for October 1917.

Prosveshcheniye, a monthly Bolshevik theoretical journal legally published in Petersburg from December 1911 to June 1914. It had a peak circulation of 5,000.

It was put out on Lenin's suggestion, and contained contributions from Vorovsky, Ulyanova-Yelizarova, Krupskaya, Olminsky and others. Gorky edited the belles-lettres section. Lenin directed its policy from Paris and then from Cracow and Poronin; he edited some of the articles and kept up a regular correspondence with members of the editorial board.

The magazine exposed opportunists—liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites—and also bourgeois nationalists, and reported on the working-class struggle at the time of the new revolutionary upsurge; it popularised Bolshevik slogans in the electoral campaign for the Fourth Duma and opposed revisionism and centrism in the parties of the Second International. It had a great part to play in educating forward-looking workers in Russia in the Marxist international spirit.

On the eve of the First World War, in June 1914 it was closed down by the tsarist government, and resumed publication in the autumn of 1917, but only one double issue was put out. p. 87

[50] *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life)—a Menshevik daily, the organ of a group of Social-Democrats known as the internationalists, among whom were Mensheviks, the followers of Martov and Menshevik minded intellectuals. Published in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918. p. 90

[51] This happened on June 4 (17), 1917, during a speech of the Menshevik Tsereteli, a Minister of the Provisional Government, who had said that there was no political party in Russia which was prepared to take full power in the country. On behalf of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin interrupted Tsereteli with the remark: "There is!" In his speech from the rostrum later, Lenin declared that the Bolshevik Party "is ready to take over full power at any moment" (see present edition Vol. 25, p. 20). p. 90

[52] From Nekrasov's poem, *Blessed Is the Gentle Poet.* p. 95

[53] Reference to a character from Gogol's *Dead Souls*. p. 96

[54] *Znamya Truda* (The Banner of Labour)—a daily, the organ of the Petrograd Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; published from August 23 (September 5), 1917. From November 1 (14), 1917 (No. 59), the organ of the Petrograd Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and the group of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Central Executive Committee of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. From December 28, 1917 (January 10, 1918) (No. 105), the paper became the Central Organ of the Party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Closed down in July 1918 during the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' revolt. p. 97

[55] *Volya Naroda* (People's Will)—a daily, the organ of the Right wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. Published in Petrograd from April 29, 1917; closed down in November 1917. Later published under other names. Closed down for good in February 1918. p. 100

[56] *Sedan*—scene of the rout of the French Army by the Prussians on September 1-2, 1870, when more than 100,000 French soldiers, together with their Emperor Napoleon III, were taken prisoner. p. 107

[57] *Shingaryov, A. I.* (1869-1918)—Cadet from 1907, member of the Cadet Central Committee. Deputy to the Second, Third and Fourth Dumas. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 was Minister of Agriculture in the First and Minister of Finance in the Second Provisional Government. p. 108

[58] See Marx's letter to L. Kugelmann of April 12, 1871. (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 318.) p. 118

[59] Reference to Chekhov's The Man in a Muffler, portraying a timid soul who is afraid of every little innovation. p. 119

[60] See Engels's letter to F. A. Sorge of February 22, 1888. p. 126

[61] Reference to the words of Molchalin, a character from Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe* who became a symbol of sycophancy and toadyism. p. 132

[62] Reference to the following: February 28 (March 13)—date of the February revolution, September 30 (October 13)—first tentative date set by the Provisional Government for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; November 28 (December 11), 1917—date of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. p. 136

[63] A quotation from N. Sukhanov's article "Another Thunderbolt" carried by the newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life).

From August 1917, the Smolny Institute was the headquarters of the Bolshevik groups of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The Revolutionary Military Committee also had its premises there from October. p. 136

[64] This letter was discussed by the Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), under the chairmanship of M. I. Kalinin, on October 5 (18), 1917. Volodarsky and Lashevich had opposed Lenin's proposal for an armed uprising. Lashevich said that the pace of developments should not be forced, and that it was best to wait for the Congress of Soviets. They were rebuffed by Kalinin, Rahja, Lacis, and others. The majority came out in favour of the armed insurrection proposed in Lenin's letter.

It was also discussed by a meeting of leading Party functionaries in the Moscow Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.). On October 7 (20), the Moscow Committee adopted a resolution setting the task of launching an immediate campaign for power. On October 10 (23), a city conference of Moscow Bolsheviks adopted a resolution declaring that only the overthrow of the Kerensky government and the installation of a workers' and peasants' government could allow the implementation of the following revolutionary measures: transfer of the land to the peasants; an offer of a just peace to the nations; and a resolute struggle against the dislocation. The Conference authorised the Moscow Committee to take steps to bring the revolutionary forces into a state of combat readiness. p. 140

[65] Written, when Lenin was in hiding, for the Extraordinary Party Congress set for October 17 (30), 1917, and the Third Petrograd City Conference of Bolsheviks. The Congress was postponed by a decision of the Central Committee on October 5 (18), and the theses were discussed at the City Conference.

Third Petrograd City Conference of Bolsheviks was held from October 7 to 11 (20-24), 1917, and was attended by 92 delegates with vote and 40 with voice but no vote. Lenin was elected honorary chairman and the conference decisions were based on his theses. In a resolution on the current political situation the Conference declared the need for replacing the Kerensky government with a revolutionary workers' and peasants' government which alone would hand the land to the peasants and take the country out of the war and the chaos. Conference decisions stressed that the country was on the eve of a mass proletarian uprising and expressed confidence that it would win out. It also discussed the question of elections to the Constituent Assembly, Lenin being among the Petrograd candidates. On October 11 (24), the Conference also heard Lenin's letter to the Petrograd City Conference (see pp. 145-48). The Conference had a very important part to play in the preparations for the Great October Socialist Revolution. p. 142

[66] *The Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region* was initially to have taken place at Helsingfors on October 8 (21), 1917. On October 5 (18), the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) decided it was to be held in Petrograd on October 10 (23). It opened on October 11 (24) and closed on October 13 (26). It was attended by 94 delegates, including 51 Bolsheviks, from Petrograd, Moscow, Novgorod, Staraya Russa, Borovichy, Revel, Yuriev, Archangel, Kronstadt, Gatchina, Tsarskoye Syelo, Sestroretsk, Vyborg, Helsingfors, etc. The Menshevik group walked out when the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, dominated by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, declared that the Congress was not a plenipotentiary regional congress but a private conference of individual Soviets. The items on its agenda were: (1) reports from the localities; (2) current political situation; (3) land question; (4) the country's military and political position; (5) All-Russia Congress of Soviets; (6) Constituent Assembly; (7) organisational question.

Lenin attached great importance to the Congress. On October 8 (21) he wrote his "Letter to the Bolshevik Comrades Attending the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region" (see pp. 182-87), which was discussed by the Bolshevik group of the Congress on the morning of October 11 (24). In its resolution on the current political situation, the Congress stressed that only an immediate transfer of power to the Soviets in the centre and in the provinces could save the country and the revolution. The Congress adopted an appeal to the peasants, calling on them to support the proletariat in its struggle for power. It elected a 17-man Northern Regional Committee including 11 Bolsheviks and 6 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Congress decisions had a great impact on the preparation, organisation and rallying of all forces for the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution. p. 146

[67] A resolution of the soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet dated September 6 (19), 1917, voiced a vigorous protest against the

planned removal of the Provisional Government from Petrograd to Moscow. It said that if the "Provisional Government was unable to protect Petrograd its duty was either to conclude peace or make way to another government". p. 146

[68] The reference is to the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), held in Petrograd on April 24-29 (May 7-12), 1917. p. 151

[69] *Spartak* (Spartacus)—a theoretical journal of the Moscow Regional Bureau, of the Moscow Committee and (from No. 2) of the Moscow District Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.); published in Moscow from May 20 (June 2) to October 29 (November 11), 1917. p. 151

[70] *Rodbertus-Jagetzow, Johann Karl* (1805-1875)—a German vulgar economist, politician and champion of Prussian Junker development along bourgeois lines.

He believed that the contradictions between labour and capital could be resolved through reforms carried out by the Prussian Junker state. He did not understand the origin of surplus value and the essence of the basic contradictions of capitalism and maintained economic crises all came from low national consumption. He said the fact that agriculture did without expenditure on raw materials gave rise to ground rent. p. 158

[71] See Frederick Engels, *Contribution to the Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme*, 1891. p. 160

[72] *Spartacus Group* (*Internationale*)—a revolutionary organisation of German Left-wing Social-Democrats formed at the beginning of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, Julian Marchlewski, Leo Jogiches (Tyszka) and Wilhelm Pieck.

The Theses on the Tasks of International Social-Democracy were written by Rosa Luxemburg, with the participation of Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring and Clara Zetkin, and were adopted by the all-Germany Conference of Left-wing Social-Democrats in January 1916, where the group set up a formal organisation and adopted the name of *Internationale*.

From 1916, the *International* group, apart from political leaflets published in 1915, began the illegal publication and circulation of *Political Letters*, which were signed "Spartacus" (they were issued regularly until October 1918). In view of this the *Internationale* group, too, assumed the name of Spartacus. They carried on revolutionary propaganda in the masses, organised massive anti-war manifestations, directed strikes, and exposed the imperialist character of the world war and the treachery of the opportunist leaders of Social-Democracy. But the Spartacus group made some grave errors on important questions of theory and policy: they denied the possibility of national-liberation wars

in the epoch of imperialism, they were inconsistent on the slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war; they underrated the role of the proletarian party as the vanguard of the working class, and were afraid of breaking with the opportunists. Lenin repeatedly criticised their mistakes and helped them to take a correct attitude (see *The Junius Pamphlet*, *The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution*, etc., in Vols. 22 and 23 of the present edition).

In April 1917, the Spartacus group were affiliated to the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, but remained organisationally independent. During the November 1918 revolution in Germany they broke with the Independents and formed the Spartacusbund, issuing their own programme on December 14, 1918. At their Constituent Congress, December 30, 1918-January 1, 1919, they set up the Communist Party of Germany. p. 161

[73] *Tribunists*—members of the Social-Democratic Party of Holland, whose organ was the newspaper Tribune. They were led by Wijnkoop, Gorter, Pannekoek and Roland-Holst. They were not a consistently revolutionary party but were on the Left wing of the working-class movement in Holland, and on the whole took an internationalist attitude during the First World War.

In 1918, they formed the Communist Party of Holland. p. 175

[74] *The Socialist Propaganda League* was formed in Boston, U.S.A., in 1915, as an independent group within the Socialist Party. It adopted the platform of the Zimmerwald Left, and rallied the revolutionary elements of the Socialist Party. After the October Revolution the League set up a Committee for Bolshevik Information, which exposed the lies and slander of bourgeois and reformist periodicals about the Soviet Republic. During the Allied armed intervention against Russia the League campaigned under the slogan of "Hands Off Soviet Russia!". p. 175

[75] *Socialist Labour Party of America*—set up in Philadelphia in 1876 at the unifying congress of the American sections of the First International and other Socialist organisations. The overwhelming majority of the party consisted of foreign-born Americans who had few ties with native workers. In its first few years, it was led by the Lassalleans, who made sectarian and dogmatic errors. Some of the party's leaders believed it should concentrate on parliamentary activity and underestimated the importance of leading the massive economic struggle; others slid down to trade-unionism and anarchism. These ideological and tactical mistakes on the part of the leadership weakened the party and led to splits. Marx and Engels sharply criticised the sectarian tactics of the U.S. Socialists.

By the nineties, the Left wing led by Daniel de Leon, assumed leadership of the party. But they, too, made mistakes of an anarch-

ist and syndicalist nature. They refused to fight for the partial demands of the working class, and shied away from activity in reformist trade unions, and this lost them what ties they had with the mass labour movement. During the First World War, the Socialist Labour Party inclined to internationalism. Under the influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution, its more revolutionary members took part in setting up the Communist Party of the United States. At present, the Socialist Labour Party is a small group without any influence on the U.S. labour movement. p. 175

[76] See Note 6. p. 180

[77] The reference is to the large anti-war manifestations in Turin, Italy, in August 1917. A demonstration against the food shortage broke out on August 21. The workers struck the following day, and a general strike followed. Barricades were thrown up. The movement assumed a political, anti-war character. On August 23, Turin's suburbs were in the hands of the insurgents. The Government threw the army against them and imposed martial law. The general strike was called off on August 27. p. 182

[78] *Black Hundreds*—monarchist gangs organised by the tsarist police to fight the revolutionary movement. They killed revolutionaries, attacked progressive intellectuals and provoked anti-Jewish pogroms. p. 185

[79] *The Meeting of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. on October 10 (23), 1917*, was the first one Lenin attended after his return to Petrograd from Vyborg. Sverdlov was in the chair. Lenin gave a report on the current situation. The Central Committee adopted the resolution motioned by Lenin who proposed immediate preparations for an armed uprising. Only Zinoviev and Kamenev voted against the proposal. Trotsky abstained, but he held that it had to be postponed until the Second Congress of Soviets, which in practice meant bungling the insurrection and allowing the Provisional Government to pull up its forces to crush the uprising on the day the Congress opened. The Central Committee rebuffed the capitulants. The October 10 meeting of the Central Committee is of tremendous historical importance. The resolution on the uprising adopted by 10 to 2 became the Bolshevik Party's directive in starting immediate preparations for an insurrection. To direct the insurrection, the Central Committee set up a Political Bureau headed by Lenin. p. 188

[80] The reference is to Sverdlov's report to the Central Committee on October 10 (23), 1917, on the third item of the agenda: "Minsk and the Northern Front". He said that there was a technical possibility of staging an armed uprising in Minsk, and that Minsk had offered to send a revolutionary corps to help Petrograd. p. 189

[81] The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) held an enlarged meeting at the Lesnovskaya District Council in Petrograd with Kalinin in the chair) on October 16 (29), 1917. It heard Lenin's report on the C.C. October 10 (23) resolution calling for an armed uprising. Kamenev and Zinoviev once again opposed the idea of an insurrection on the plea that the Bolsheviks were not strong enough and should await the Constituent Assembly. The resolution was resolutely supported by Dzerzhinsky, Kalinin Rahja, Sverdlov, Skrypnik and others who sharply criticised Kamenev's and Zinoviev's back-tracking. Lenin's resolution was adopted by 19 votes to 2, with four abstentions. A closed meeting of the Central Committee set up a Revolutionary Military Centre to direct the insurrection. It was to be a part of the Soviet Revolutionary Military Committee. p. 191

[82] A reference to the enlarged Central Committee meeting on October 16 (29), 1917. Lenin remained in hiding in Petrograd and changed the date of the meeting to October 15 (28) in order to conceal his presence at the meeting; for reasons of secrecy he referred to a comrade who had allegedly informed him of the meeting. p. 195

[83] The peasant movement in Tambov Gubernia in September 1917 assumed great proportions: the peasants seized tracts of landed estates, destroyed and burned landowners' mansions and confiscated grain stocks. In September, 82 landowners' estates were destroyed in 68 gubernias and regions, including 32 in Tambov Gubernia. Altogether there is a record of 166 peasant manifestations in the gubernia, especially in Kozlov Uyezd. The frightened landowners took their grain to the railway stations in an effort to sell it, so that the railway junctures were literally swamped with grain. The commanding officer of the Moscow Military District sent military units to Tambov Gubernia to crush the peasant uprising, and imposed martial law, but the peasants' revolutionary struggle for land continued to grow in scope. p. 197

[84] *Scheidemann*, *Philip* (1865-1939)—a leader of the extreme Right-wing opportunist section of German Social-Democracy, and an organiser of the bloody suppression of the German working-class movement in 1918-21.

Renaudel, *Pierre* (1871-1935)—a reformist leader of the French Socialist Party. p. 203

[85] *Planson*, *A. A.*—a Popular Socialist, and member of the Central Executive Committee (First Convocation). A leader of Vikzhel—the All-Russia Executive Committee of the Railwaymen's Trade Union, an organisation run by the compromisers. p. 206

[86] *Novoye Vremya* (New Times)—a daily published in Petersburg from 1868 to 1917, by various publishers. It changed political

colours a number of times, and from 1905 became the organ of the Black Hundreds. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917, it took a counter-revolutionary attitude and conducted a rabid campaign against the Bolsheviks. Closed down by the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet on October 26 (November 8), 1917. Lenin said it was an example of the corrupt press. p. 211

[87] This and the letter on pp. 223-27 are a reflection of Lenin's struggle against Kamenev and Zinoviev, who tried to frustrate the C.C. decision on an armed uprising. They were defeated at the Central Committee meeting on October 10 (23), 1917, which discussed the question of an uprising, and on the next day sent the C.C. a statement of their views and a letter opposing the C.C. decision entitled "On the Current Situation" to the Petersburg, Moscow, Moscow Regional, and Finnish Regional Committees of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) and the Bolshevik groups of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets and the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region. Having failed to rally support at an enlarged meeting of the Petersburg Committee on October 15 (28), which heard their letter and the enlarged meeting of the Central Committee on October 16 (29), where they again spoke against any armed uprising Kamenev and Zinoviev stooped to downright treason. On October 18 (31), the semi-Menshevik newspaper, *Novaya Zhizn*, carried an item entitled: "Kamenev about the 'Uprising'", in which the author, on behalf of Zinoviev and himself argued against the armed uprising and incidentally gave away a most important secret Party decision to the enemy. That same day, Lenin wrote his first letter (p. 216) and the next day the second (p. 223), branding the move as betrayal of the revolution. He called the two men strike-breakers and demanded their expulsion from the Party.

Lenin's letter was discussed by the Central Committee on October 20 (November 2), when Dzerzhinsky, who spoke first, motioned that "Kamenev should withdraw from political activity entirely". As for Zinoviev, he said, he was in hiding from the authorities and was not participating in any Party activity anyway. Sverdlov said Kamenev's act could have no justification whatever, but the Central Committee was not authorised to expel members from the Party. He suggested that Kamenev should resign from the Central Committee. Stalin spoke twice. He first proposed that the discussion should be transferred to a C.C. plenary meeting, and when the proposal was voted down, he declared that "expulsion from the Party was no remedy". He proposed that Zinoviev and Kamenev should be left in the C.C. and should be bound to abide by C.C. decisions.

Kamenev was removed from the C.C., and both were forbidden to make any statement against decisions of the C.C. and its policies. It was also decided that members of the C.C. should be prohibited from making public statements against decisions passed by the C.C.

Lenin did not agree with the decision and said it was a compromise. p. 216

[88] *The Third Zimmerwald Conference* took place at Stockholm from September 5 to 12, 1917. The composition of the Conference was very mixed, as Lenin said in the present article. He wrote: "They were people who were bound to disagree on the *fundamental* trend of their policy". The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) was represented by V. V. Vorovsky and N. A. Semashko.

The Conference examined the Grimm Affair. Grimm had been exposed in Russia as an emissary of the Swiss Minister Hoffmann, who was putting out feelers for a separate peace treaty in the interests of German imperialism. By that time Grimm had been relieved of his post of Chairman of the International Socialist Committee; the Conference approved his expulsion from the I.S.C., declaring that his behaviour had been inadmissible, a measure Lenin considered inadequate.

During the discussion of the attitude the Socialists of the Second International took to the Stockholm Peace Conference, some delegates came out in favour of participation, while the Russian Mensheviks were given an imperative mandate to remain at the Zimmerwald Conference only on condition that it would participate in the Stockholm Conference *in toto*.

On behalf of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) Central Committee and its Bureau Abroad and Polish Social-Democrats, the Mensheviks and their followers were sharply criticised by Vorovsky who demanded a resolution on the state of affairs in Russia. However, the Centrist majority of the Conference refused to adopt such a resolution on the plea that they were not sufficiently well informed about Russian affairs.

The conference manifesto called on workers of all countries to stage a general strike against war, but it did not reflect any of the revolutionary Social-Democratic slogans on turning the imperialist war into a civil war and fighting for a defeat of the home government in each belligerent country. The Third Zimmerwald Conference bore out Lenin's conclusion that the Zimmerwald Association had gone bankrupt and that there was need to break with it immediately and set up a Third, Communist, International. The Third Zimmerwald Conference was the last one held by the Association.

Lenin cites the date of the Conference as erroneously given by the Menshevik newspaper *Iskra*. p. 220

[89] *Iskra* (The Spark)—the newspaper of the Menshevik internationalists; published in Petrograd from September 26 (October 9) to December 4 (17), 1917.

Menshevik internationalists—a small group within the Menshevik Party which took an inconsistently internationalist attitude during the First World War. Prominent among them were L. Martov, Y. Larin and A. Martynov. From April to June 1917 they published the monthly, *International*.

They took a Centrist attitude and criticised the social chauvinists but were afraid to break with them and opposed the basic principles of Lenin's tactics adopted by the Bolshevik Party on war, peace and revolution.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution, some of them sided with avowed enemies of Soviet power and left the country. Others accepted Soviet power and worked in Soviet institutions. Some of them joined the Bolshevik Party. p. 220

[90] *Politiken* (Politics)—a newspaper of the Swedish Left Social-Democrats, who formed the Left Social-Democratic Party of Sweden in 1917; it was published in Stockholm from April 27, 1916. From November 1917 it came out under the name of *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* (People's Political Daily). Among its contributors were Zimmerwald Left Socialists from Germany, Russia, France and other countries. Then the Left Social-Democratic Party joined the Communist International in 1921, it became the Communist Party, and the newspaper became its organ. When the party split in October 1929, the paper passed into the hands of the Right wing. It suspended publication in May 1945.

Työmies (The Worker)—a newspaper of the Social-Democratic Party of Finland, published in Helsingfors from March 1895 to 1918. p. 220

[91] *The Internationalist*—a weekly, the organ of the Left-wing Socialists, published in Boston, U.S.A., from early 1917 by the Socialist Propaganda League. On its editorial board were U.S. and other internationalists, among them Williams, Gibbs, Zartarian, Rosin, Rutgers, and Edwards. p. 221

[92] *Stürgkh, Karl* (1859-1916)—reactionary Austrian statesman; from 1911 to 1916, head of the Austro-Hungarian Government which took active part in preparing and starting the First World War. It dissolved the Austrian and later the Hungarian Parliament and set up a military-absolutist dictatorship which crushed the mounting anti-war and revolutionary movement. In October 1916, Stürgkh was killed by the Austrian Social-Democrat Friedrich Adler. p. 221

[93] A reference (as on p. 224) to the enlarged meeting of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), on October 16 (29), 1917, at which Zinoviev and Kamenev opposed the decision to launch an armed uprising taken on October 10 (23). p. 224

[94] Lenin refers to the reforms launched by the British bourgeoisie in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century under pressure from the Irish land movement. See also Lenin's article "The British Liberals and Ireland" (in Volume 20 of the present edition). p. 232

[95] Written on the night of October 24 (November 6). That same day Lenin secretly arrived at Smolny and took over the leadership of the uprising. p. 234

[96] *Verkhovsky, A. I.* (1886-1941)—Minister of War in the last bourgeois Provisional Government. On October 19, (November 1), 1917, he resigned over the Pre-parliament's rejection of his proposal for demobilising a considerable part of the army and other measures. p. 234

[97] *The Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet* was set up on October 12 (25), 1917, on instructions from the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party. Its members were drawn from the Central Committee, the Petersburg Committee the Petrograd Soviet, factory committees, trade unions and military organisations. It operated under the leadership of the Central Committee and was closely bound up with the Bolshevik Military Organisation in forming Red Guard detachments and arming the workers. Its main task was to prepare the armed uprising in accordance with the Central Committee directives. It carried on diverse activity in organising the combat forces for victory in the October Revolution. Its leading core, the Revolutionary Military Centre, was formed by the Central Committee on October 16 (29), 1917, and received daily directions from Lenin. After the victory of the October Revolution and the election of the Soviet Government at the Second Congress of Soviets, the main task of the Revolutionary Military Committee was to fight the counter-revolution and safeguard the revolutionary order. It handed over its functions to various People's Commissariats as they arose. It was dissolved on December 5 (18), 1917. p. 234

[98] Written by Lenin on behalf of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. It was carried by the newspaper *Rabochy i Soldat* on October 25 (November 7), 1917, and reprinted by the *Derevenskaya Bednota, Izvestia* and other newspapers.

Rabochy i Soldat (Worker and Soldier)—an evening paper, the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies; published from October 17 (30), 1917 to February 1918. p. 236

[99] The meeting opened at 2.35 p.m. on October 25 (November 7), and heard a report of the Revolutionary Military Committee on the overthrow of the Provisional Government and the triumph of the revolution. Lenin gave a report on the tasks facing Soviet power. The resolution motioned by Lenin (see p. 241) was adopted by an overwhelming majority. p. 239

[100] The reference is to secret diplomatic documents, such as the secret treaties concluded by the tsarist and later by the bourgeois Provisional Government of Russia with the governments of Britain,

France, Germany, Japan and other imperialist powers. From November 10 (23), 1917, these documents were published in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, and in December were put out in a series entitled *Collection of Secret Documents from the Archives of the Former Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Seven volumes were published from December 1917 to February 1918. By publishing the secret treaties, the Soviet Government's revolutionary propaganda struck a great blow for a general democratic peace, without annexations and indemnities, and exposed the imperialist nature of the First World War. p. 239

[101] Held in Petrograd on October 25 and 26 (November 7 and 8), 1917. It was also attended by delegates from a number of uyezd and gubernia Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. When the Congress opened, 649 delegates were in attendance, among them 390 Bolsheviks, 160 Socialist-Revolutionaries, 72 Mensheviks, and 14 Menshevik internationalists. More delegates arrived later.

It opened at Smolny Institute at 10.40 p.m. on October 25, while the Red Guard detachments, sailors and revolutionary units of the Petrograd garrison were still storming the Winter Palace, where the Provisional Government had taken refuge under the protection of its shock troops and officer cadets. Lenin was directing the uprising and did not attend the first sitting. Fourteen Bolsheviks were elected to the Presidium, among them Lenin, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Krylenko and Lunacharsky; seven Socialist-Revolutionaries including Kamkov, Karelin and Spiridonova, and one member of the Ukrainian Socialist Party. The Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries declined to sit on the Presidium. The leaders of the Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary Right wing motioned that negotiations should be started with the Provisional Government to set up a coalition government, because, they said, the socialist revolution then under way was nothing but a plot. When they saw that the majority supported the Bolsheviks, they walked out (they were joined by Bund delegates). Shortly after 3.00 a.m., October 26 (November 8), the Congress heard a report on the capture of the Winter Palace and the arrest of the Provisional Government and adopted its appeal "To Workers, Soldiers and Peasants!" It was written by Lenin, and proclaimed the transfer of power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The sitting closed after 5.00 a.m.

The second sitting opened at 9.00 p.m. the same day, heard Lenin's reports and adopted his historic decrees on peace and on land; it formed the workers' and peasants' government known as the Council of People's Commissars, headed by Lenin. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries refused to enter the Soviet Government, which consisted of Bolsheviks only. A 101-man All-Russia Central Executive Committee elected by the Congress included 62 Bolsheviks and 29 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The Congress also decided that the All-Russia Central Executive Committee could be enlarged by delegates from Peasants' Soviets

and army units, and groups which had walked out. The Congress closed after 5.00 a.m. p. 243

[102] The reference is to the Central Executive Committee elected by the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets which was held in Petrograd from June 3 to 24 (June 16 to July 7), 1917. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who favoured support of the bourgeois Provisional Government, had a majority in the First Executive Committee. p. 247

[103] The reference is to the belligerents in the First World War: the Entente (France, Britain, Russia, Italy and the U.S.A., which joined them) and also Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, Japan and China; and the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austro-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria). p. 249

[104] *The Anti-Socialist Law* was introduced in Germany in 1878 by the Bismarck Government to fight the working-class and socialist movement. It outlawed all Social-Democratic organisations, working-class associations, the working-class press, and provided for the confiscation of socialist literature. Social-Democrats were harassed and deported. However these reprisals failed to break down the Social-Democratic Party, which adapted itself to underground activity: its central organ, *Sozial-Demokrat* was published abroad, and it held regular party congresses (1880, 1883 and 1887). Underground Social-Democratic organisations and groups were rapidly revived at home and operated under a Central Committee in hiding. At the same time, the Party used various legal means of strengthening its ties with the masses and its influence grew steadily: from 1878 to 1890, the number of votes it polled in the Reichstag elections more than tripled. Marx and Engels gave the German Social-Democrats a great deal of help. In 1890, the Anti-Socialist Law was lifted as a result of mass pressure and the mounting working-class movement. p. 251

[105] The reference is to a manifesto issued by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to the peoples of the world, which was carried by the newspaper *Izvestia* No. 15, of March 15, 1917. p. 253

[106] See Note 44. p. 253

[107] See Note 38. p. 258

[108] *A labour standard* is the amount of land that could be tilled by its owner without outside help.

A subsistence standard is the minimum amount of land necessary to feed a family. p. 259

[109] *The Law on Workers' Control* was drafted right after the revolution. Lenin's Draft Regulations on Workers' Control, which he wrote

on October 26 or 27 (November 8 or 9), 1917, was discussed and in the main adopted by a meeting at the Petrograd Central Council of Factory Committee, at which Lenin was present. On October 27, the draft was placed before the Council of People's Commissars, which authorised Milyutin and Larin to draw up detailed Draft Regulations on Workers' Control within two days. But their draft clashed with the tasks of revolutionary workers' control formulated by Lenin; for instance, it did not contain the most important clause making decisions of workers' control bodies binding on factory owners. Lenin's draft was then taken as a basis for the law on workers' control. It was amended and published in *Gazeta Vremennogo Rabochego i Krestyanskogo Pravitelstva* (Gazette of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government) No. 3, of November 1 (14), under the title: "Draft Law on Workers Control (Submitted to the Labour Commission)". In the subsequent discussion, it was proposed that workers' control bodies setup in the localities should be replaced by government bodies, and that workers' control should be introduced only at the major factories, railways, etc. Lenin won his point that workers' control should be introduced everywhere to stimulate the workers' initiative. The final drafting of the decree was assigned to a commission of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee appointed on November 8 (21). On November 14 (27) the All-Russia Central Executive Committee examined the commission's draft and issued the decree which is known as "Regulations on Workers' Control", and contains the basic provisions of Lenin's draft. The decree was published in *Izvestia* No. 227, on November 16 (29). p. 264

[110] The Conference was called by the Revolutionary Military Committee to decide on the defence of Petrograd against the counter-revolutionary forces. It was attended by 40 army delegates. The following items were on its agenda: (1) information; (2) formation of a H.Q.; (3) arming of detachments; (4) law and order. After a special report from the front, the meeting heard a report on the current situation by Lenin, in his capacity of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. Lenin also spoke on other points. Several delegates reported on the state of affairs in their areas. The Conference adopted a unanimous appeal to the soldiers of Petrograd urging them to fight for the gains of the revolution. p. 270

[111] *Left Socialist-Revolutionaries*—the party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (internationalists); formed at its First All-Russia Congress held from November 19 to 28 (December 2 to 11), 1917. Until then they had existed as a Left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which took shape during the First World War. They were headed by Spiridonova, Kamkov and Natanson (Bobrov). The Left wing grew rapidly after the July 1917 events (see Note 8) and this was a reflection of the shift to the Left among the peasants. In August, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries secured

control of the newspaper *Znamya Truda* (see Note 54), which subsequently became the Central Organ of their Party.

At the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviet, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries constituted a majority of the Socialist-Revolutionary group, which split up on the question of participation in the Congress; the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, acting on directives of their Party's Central Committee, left the Congress, while the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries remained and voted with the Bolsheviks on the major items of the agenda. The Bolsheviks believed that a bloc should be formed with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who at that time had a considerable following among the peasants. Accordingly, they invited them to enter the Soviet Government, but they refused and insisted on the demand to set up a so-called "uniform socialist government" with the participation of the Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and other parties and groups. After considerable hesitation, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, intent on retaining their influence among the peasants, agreed to collaborate with the Bolsheviks. As a result of the talks held in late November and early December 1917, an agreement was reached on their participation in the Government. They committed themselves to follow the common policy of the Council of People's Commissars, and were made members of several collegiums of People's Commissariats.

While collaborating with the Bolsheviks, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries took wrong attitudes on vital aspects of socialist construction and opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat. In January and February 1918, their Central Committee launched a campaign against the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and when it was signed and ratified by the Fourth Congress of Soviets in March, they withdrew from the Government, but continued to take part in the collegiums and local organs of power. In July, their Central Committee organised the assassination of the German Ambassador Mirbach in Moscow and an armed revolt against Soviet power in the hope of sabotaging the peace treaty and provoking war between Soviet Russia and Germany. The Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, held after the suppression of the July revolt, decided to expel Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who shared the views of their leadership from the Soviets. Having lost all support among the masses, the party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries launched an armed fight against Soviet power. Some of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who wanted to collaborate with the Bolsheviks formed a party of Narodnik Communists and Revolutionary Communists, and a considerable number of them later joined the Communist Party. p. 270

[112] The reference is to the Bolsheviks' participation in a conference called by the Vikzhel for talks on the composition of the government.

The Vikzhel, the All-Russia Central Committee of the Railwaymen's Trade Union which was dominated by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, was one of the bulwarks of the

counter-revolution after the victory of the October insurrection in Petrograd. On October 29 (November 11), 1917 it adopted a resolution calling for a so-called "uniform socialist government", consisting of representatives of all parties, from the Bolsheviks to the Popular Socialists. The Conference on the composition of the government opened on the same day and was attended by Menshevik defencists, Menshevik internationalists, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, and members of the Postal Union, the Petrograd Duma, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, etc. The Bolshevik Central Committee decided to attend stating that any talks on the enlargement of the government and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee could take place only on the basis of the programme for Soviet power adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets. Kamenev and Sokolnikov were authorised by the Central Committee to attend. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee also sent its representatives to the Conference, among whom was Ryazanov.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries expected to play the leading part in any coalition government and to use it to fight the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the Co-ordinating Committee set up by the Conference, they demanded that resistance to Kerensky's troops be stopped and insisted that the All-Russia Central Executive Committee should be replaced by a People's Council which would have a majority of members representing the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies City councils and other organisations which they had under control. They proposed the establishment of a new government headed by Chernov or Avksentyev. The Bolshevik delegates who attended took a conciliatory attitude and did not object to discussing the proposals tabled by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The Bolshevik Central Committee discussed the question of negotiations with the Vikzhel and the behaviour of the Bolshevik delegates on November 1 (14). The majority censured the policy of conciliation and proposed that the talks should either be broken off or formulated as an ultimatum. Kamenev, Milyutin, Rykov and Ryazanov insisted on a continuation of the talks. A C.C. resolution said the parties of conciliation were negotiating to subvert Soviet power, and the C.C. therefore authorised Bolshevik representatives to attend the talks with the sole aim of exposing the futile attempts to set up a coalition government, and terminating the talks. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee discussed the progress of the talks on the night of November 1 (14) and adopted a Bolshevik resolution drawn up in the spirit of the C.C. decision of November 1 (14). However, the opposition group of Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Milyutin, Larin, Ryazanov and others, who took a Right-wing opportunist stand, opposed their line to that of the Central Committee and fought against the C.C. decision. On November 2 (15), the C.C. adopted a resolution on the opposition within the C.C. (see pp. 277-79). At the All-

Russia Central Executive Committee meeting on the night of November 2 (15), following the speeches of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who demanded a review of the Committee's decision on the terms of an agreement, Kamenev and Zinoviev pushed through a resolution which clashed with that of the Central Committee adopted earlier. Their resolution provided for a change in the composition of the government and gave the Bolsheviks only half the government posts. The opposition voted for this resolution. Following the ultimatum which the majority of the Central Committee presented to the opposition minority (see pp. 280-82) on November 3 (16), Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Milyutin and Nogin withdrew from the Central Committee, while the last three and Teodorovich resigned from their posts of People's Commissars. They were joined by Ryazanov, Larin and several others. On November 5 or 6 (18 or 19), the Central Committee once again demanded in the form of an ultimatum that Kamenev, Zinoviev, Ryazanov and Larin should stop their disrupting tactics (they had come out against the C.C. decisions in non-Party organisations) (see p. 302). On November 7 (20), the Central Committee published in *Pravda* an appeal to all members of the Party and all working classes of Russia, branding the opposition as deserters of the revolution who had abandoned the principles of Bolshevism (see pp. 304-08). p. 276

[113] Written by Lenin in connection with a discussion of the matter by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on November 4 (17), 1917.

On October 26 (November 8), 1917, the Revolutionary Military Committee took a decision to close down a number of bourgeois newspapers—*Rech*, *Dyen* and others—for their counter-revolutionary propaganda. The Decree on the Press was adopted by the Council of People's Commissars the next day. On November 4 (17) the All-Russia Central Executive Committee discussed the question of the press, with Larin and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries—Kolegayev, Karelin, Proshyan and others—opposing the decree.

Lenin spoke in favour of the measures taken by the Revolutionary Military Committee and the Government (see pp. 285-87). By a majority of 34 to 24, with 1 abstention, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee adopted a Bolshevik resolution voicing unconditional support for the Government's policy on the press. The resolution drafted by Lenin was not tabled at the meeting. p. 283

[114] The question was addressed to Lenin, as the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, at a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on November 4 (17), 1917, in connection with the issue of several decrees by the Council of People's Commissars without the sanction of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Having heard Lenin's explanations, the Left Socialist-Revolutionary group declared them to be unsatisfactory. Uritsky tabled a resolution on behalf of the Bolshevik group

expressing full confidence in the Government. Before the vote on the resolution, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries declared that the People's Commissars, being parties in interest, should not take part in the voting. A majority of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee passed a resolution approving the Government's activity. p. 288

[115] A reference to order No. 1 of November 1 (14), 1917, issued by the officer in command of the troops defending Petrograd, Muravyov, calling on the soldiers, sailors and Red Guardsmen to deal ruthlessly with any criminal elements. Because his wording could lead to undesirable consequences the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on November 2 (15) asked the People's Commissariat of the Interior to rescind it. p. 290

[116] Lenin is referring to a speech by the Left Socialist-Revolutionary G. D. Zaks in defence of the Right-wing opportunist attitude of Nogin, Rykov, Milyutin and others on the issue of setting up a "uniform socialist government". He said he feared the socialist revolution in Russia would be left in isolation because Western Europe was disgracefully silent. p. 292

[117] See Note 71. p. 292

[118] See Note 109. p. 295

[119] *Committee of Salvation* (*Committee of Public Safety*) was set up on October 25 (November 7), 1917, by the Moscow City Council to fight the Soviets in Moscow, and led the counter-revolutionary revolt of officer cadets which broke out on October 28 (November 10). The revolt was crushed on November 2 (15), and the Committee capitulated to the Moscow Revolutionary Military Committee. p. 297

[120] Written in connection with numerous questions submitted by peasant messengers to the Council of People's Commissars. Each messenger got a typewritten answer bearing Lenin's personal signature. It was published in the newspapers *Derevenskaya Bednota*, *Izvestia* and others, and was issued as a leaflet under the title, "Instruction to Peasants". The answer was an important document regulating the revolutionary abolition of landed estates. p. 300

[121] The circumstances which led to the conversation between members of the Soviet Government and Field H.Q. in Mogilev are set forth on pp. 312-13 and 316-17.

Field H.Q., which in that period was a centre where plans were being hatched for the overthrow of Soviet power, was occupied by revolutionary troops on November 20 (December 3). p. 309

[122] The conversation was conducted by the People's Commissar for War N. V. Krylenko. p. 310

[123] The Soviet Government's call on the soldiers to take the initiative in the armistice negotiations met with broad response in the army. On various sectors divisions, corps and armies, and even entire fronts (e.g., the Western Front) sent envoys across the line and concluded ceasefire agreements, which provided for a stop to military operations, reinforcements, construction of military installations, etc. These so-called "soldiers' peace treaties" remained in force until the conclusion of a general armistice.

p. 312

[124] The Congress was called by a decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and met in Petrograd from November 10 to 25 (November 23 to December 8), 1917. Attempts were made by the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Executive Committee of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies (elected by the First All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies in May 1917) to prevent the Congress from meeting and the peasant delegates from coming into contact with the Bolsheviks. These attempts were foiled by the vigorous efforts of the Bolsheviks, who were supported by grass roots delegates and the Left Socialist-Revolutionary minority of the peasant Executive.

About 260 delegates attended the first sitting, on November 18 (December 1) there were 330 delegates with vote, including 195 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 37 Bolsheviks, 65 Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Right and Centre, and more were arriving.

The Congress was the scene of a sharp struggle between the Right and Left wing, with the Right-wingers eventually walking out. The Bolsheviks' fight against the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries was hampered by the vacillation of the Left-wingers. The resolution "On Power" tabled by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries contained the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik demand for a government of all socialist parties, from Popular Socialists to the Bolsheviks, inclusive. But in that same resolution the Congress stated that the government was being set up to implement the programme of the Second Congress of Soviets. It also provided for a merger of the Executive of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies with the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

The Right-wingers failed in their efforts to split the Congress. On November 15 (28) it discussed and approved the Presidium's report on the terms for the merger worked out jointly with the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, on whose behalf Sverdlov delivered a speech of greetings. The Congress then moved as a body to Smolny, where at 6.00 p.m. a ceremonial joint sitting was held by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and the Petrograd Soviet. It heard a report on the merger of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Executive Committee elected by the Congress, and adopted a resolution confirming the decrees of the Second Congress of Soviets on peace and on land, and the decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on workers' control.

The Congress adopted a resolution on the agrarian question which was tabled by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and was based on the principle of equalitarian land tenure.

The Congress authorised the Presidium to open the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies on November 26 (December 9). The delegates to the Extraordinary Congress were incorporated in the Second Congress.

Lenin spoke three times in explanation of the Bolshevik attitude to the agrarian question and the terms of agreement with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. His speeches were of tremendous importance in guiding the Congress and rallying its Left wing. p. 321

[125] Written in connection with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' objections to the Bolshevik demand that Lenin should be invited to speak at the Congress in his capacity of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. They thought this would be prejudicial to the issue of power. On their motion, the Congress rejected the Bolshevik proposal, and Lenin addressed it as a member of the Bolshevik group. p. 323

[126] The reference is to the instruction to the volost land committees approved by the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on June 23 (July 6), 1917, and published as a law "On the Volost Committees" on November 3 (16), 1917. p. 325

[127] The reference is to the start of the peace talks with Germany.

Following the publication of the Decree on Peace, adopted by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Soviet Government took practical steps to conclude a general democratic peace among the belligerents. On November 7 (20), 1917, it issued special directions to General Dukhonin, the Commander-in-Chief, ordering him to make an offer to the enemy command to stop military operations and open peace talks. The directions said the government deemed it necessary to make a formal proposal for an armistice between the belligerents without delay (*Izvestia* No. 221, November 10, 1917). But the counter-revolutionary top brass, who had contacts with the military missions of the Entente, blocked the armistice in every possible way. On November 8 (21), the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs sent a note to the Allied ambassadors proposing an immediate ceasefire on all fronts and negotiations on peace. The Entente ambassadors met at the U.S. Embassy in Petrograd on November 9 (22) and decided to ignore the Soviet Government's note.

The refusal of the Entente imperialists to support the Soviet Government's peace initiative and their active resistance to the conclusion of a peace, forced the Council of People's Commissars to start separate peace talks with Germany. On November 14 (27), word was received that the German High Command was prepared to start armistice talks. On the Soviet Government's proposal the

talks were postponed for five days to give the Allied Governments another chance to make known their attitude on the peace proposal. On November 15 (28), the Soviet Government issued its appeal to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries urging them to join in the peace negotiations. There was no reply from the Allied powers.

On November 19 (December 2), a Soviet peace delegation led by A. A. Ioffe arrived in the neutral zone and proceeded to Brest-Litovsk, where it met a delegation of the Austro-Hungarian bloc which included representatives of Bulgaria and Turkey. A 10-day ceasefire was arranged as a result of the talks of November 20-22 (December 3-5). The Soviet Government took the opportunity to try to turn the separate talks with Germany into negotiations for a general democratic peace. On November 24 (December 7) it sent another note to the Entente ambassadors inviting them to join in the talks. This note was also ignored. On December 2 (15), the talks were resumed and that same day a 28-day ceasefire was agreed upon. It provided for a peace conference, which opened at Brest-Litovsk on December 9 (22). p. 325

[128] Placed before the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on November 21 (December 4), 1917, by the Bolshevik group. The need for such a decree was substantiated by Lenin (see pp. 338-40). The right of recall was in principle upheld by a majority of the Committee; two members voted against, and one abstained. The draft was referred to a Co-ordinating Committee with the participation of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. It introduced amendments to Lenin's draft, in which the right to appoint elections was vested in congresses of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies (instead of the Soviets themselves), while the Soviets were empowered to appoint elections upon the demand of more than half the electorate in a given electoral district. The draft worked out by the Co-ordinating Committee was unanimously adopted by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and published in *Izvestia* No. 233 on November 23 (December 6).

Under it several peasants' and army congresses passed decisions recalling deputies from the Constituent Assembly. They were Cadets, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. including Avksentyev, Gots, Milyukov, and others. p. 336

[129] The reference is to the *Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies* held from November 10 to 25 (November 23 to December 8), 1917. See Note 124. p. 339

[130] *The First All-Russia Congress of the Navy* was held at Petrograd from November 18 to 25 (December 1 to 8), 1917. On its agenda were the following items: the current situation and the question of power; the activity of the Central Committee of the Navy; reforms in the Navy Department, etc. It was addressed by Lenin, who spoke on the current situation. It discussed the activity of Tsentroflot which had betrayed its electors, and endorsed the

activity of the Revolutionary Naval Committee which had dissolved Tsentroflot. It approved the organisational scheme for the administration of the Navy Department, and elected 20 men to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The Congress sent a message of greetings to the Council of People's Commissars and an appeal to the whole of Russia. p. 341

[131] *Romanov*—Nicholas 11 (1868-1918), the last Russian Emperor, who reigned from 1894 to the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917. He was shot in Yekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk) on July 17, 1918, by order of the Urals Regional Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Rasputin, G. Y. (1872-1916)—an adventurer who enjoyed great influence at the Court of Tsar Nicholas II. He was of peasant stock and came from Tobolsk Gubernia. The Rasputin period is the epitome of the obscurantism, fanaticism and moral degradation of Russia's ruling circles. Rasputin was killed in Petrograd by a group of monarchists who tried to save the dynasty and stifle the growing revolution. p. 345

[132] Written, it would appear, in connection with the discussion by the Soviet Government on November 27 (December 10), 1917, of instructions to the Soviet delegation empowered to negotiate a peace with Germany at the peace conference at Brest-Litovsk. The government decision on this question said: "Instruction on the Talks, on the Basis of the Decree on Peace."

The peace conference opened on December 9 (22), 1917, and was attended by the Soviet delegation and those of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey). At the first sitting the Soviet delegation read out a declaration on the peace terms. The other side appeared to agree to conduct the talks on these terms, but in fact this preliminary period already revealed Germany's annexationist intentions. On January 5 (18), the delegates of the Quadruple Alliance made known their governments' territorial claims to the Soviet delegation. This included a part of Russia which was to be ceded to Germany and Austria-Hungary (a territory of more than 150,000 square kilometres): Poland, Lithuania, a part of Estonia and Latvia, and also sizable areas inhabited by Ukrainians and Byelorussians.

Despite the clearly predatory nature of the terms put forward by the German imperialists, Lenin insisted on the conclusion of peace because he believed a breathing space was necessary to build up Soviet power in view of the general war-weariness and dislocation and the army's low morale, any continuation of the war would be fatal to Soviet power. This attitude was opposed by Trotsky and a group of Left Communists, including Bukharin, Lomov (Oppokov), Ioffe, Pyatakov and Osinsky (Obolensky), who insisted on breaking off the talks. They put forward the reckless slogan of a "revolutionary war" and bitterly attacked Lenin and his supporters. Their views gained some ground among Party

organisations in Moscow, Petrograd, the Urals, etc. The Moscow Regional Bureau of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), where the Left Communists temporarily had a majority, adopted a resolution on December 28, 1917 (January 10, 1918), demanding that the talks with Germany should be broken off. Trotsky, who led the Soviet delegation at the second stage of the peace talks, adopted the provocative attitude which was summed up in his statement: "No peace, no war, army demobilised." Trotsky and the Left Communists were imposing a policy on the Party which led to the destruction of the Soviet state.

On January 8 (21), 1918, Lenin gave an elaborate substantiation of the need for a peace in his "Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace" (see pp. 442-50 and Note 161). But the Central Committee was not unanimous on the question of peace. Lenin only succeeded in obtaining a decision to prolong the talks. When the Soviet delegation was leaving for Brest-Litovsk, Lenin instructed Trotsky to drag out the talks to the utmost, but to sign a peace treaty in the event of a German ultimatum.

The talks were resumed on January 17 (30). On January 27 (February 9), the delegation of the Austro-German bloc concluded a secret treaty with the representatives of the bourgeois-nationalist Central Ukrainian Rada, which actually gave Germany leave to plunder the Ukraine. Having thus reinforced its position, the German delegation, at the sittings on January 27 and 28 (February 9 and 10), demanded that the talks be speeded up. On January 28 (February 10), the Soviet delegation asked for instructions and Lenin reaffirmed his earlier instructions (see p. 517). However, Trotsky treacherously disobeyed these instructions and issued a statement at Brest-Litovsk to the effect that Soviet Russia would not sign a peace treaty would discontinue the war, and would demobilise the army. This led to a break-down of the talks. On February 18, the Germans started an offensive along the whole front .

At the morning sittings of the Central Committee on February 17 and 18, Lenin's proposal that talks should be started with Germany right away received a minority of votes. Lenin first secured a majority in favour of signing a peace treaty at the evening sitting of the Central Committee urgently called on February 18, following a sharp and protracted struggle against Trotsky and the Left Communists, when the German offensive had become a fact.

On the morning of February 19 a wireless message was sent to the German Government stating the Soviet Government's readiness to sign a peace on the German terms set forth at Brest-Litovsk (see p. 525). The German Command took its time, while its troops continued to advance along the whole front, and within a week occupied a number of cities and came within striking distance of Petrograd.

The German Command's reply, received on February 23, contained even more onerous terms. The intense struggle continued

in the Central Committee when the matter of the new German ultimatum was discussed on February 23. It finally gave Lenin a majority for an immediate peace treaty on Germany's terms. That night, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars decided to accept the German peace terms, and this was communicated to the German Government.

The Left Communists continued their fight against the peace treaty, but the position of Lenin and his supporters was gaining ground among the Party masses. Most of the local government organisations polled by the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee also favoured signing the peace treaty. It was signed on March 3. The Seventh Party Congress, which was urgently called, gave a majority for the Leninist policy on peace. The Extraordinary Fourth Congress of Soviets, held from March 14 to March 16, ratified the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

The November revolution in Germany (1918) overthrew Kaiser Wilhelm II, and this allowed the Soviet Government to abrogate the Treaty. p. 349

[133] The text which follows was written by J. V. Stalin. p. 349

[134] The decree was adopted by the Council of People's Commissars on November 28 (December 11), 1917, following a counter-revolutionary demonstration staged that day by the Cadets in Petrograd. They had intended to mount a counter-revolutionary revolt by opening the Constituent Assembly despite the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of November 26 (December 9), 1917, stating that it would be opened by a person specially authorised to do so by the government and in the presence of at least half its members. p. 351

[135] Delivered in the discussion of the question on the arrest of the Cadets who were members of the All-Russia Commission for Elections to the Constituent Assembly presented on behalf of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary group at a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on November 25 (December 8) They demanded an explanation of the grounds on which the personal immunity of members of the Constituent Assembly, an organ of supreme power, had been violated Following Lenin's speech and a discussion a majority of 150 to 98, with 3 abstentions, adopted Lenin's resolution approving the government decree ordering the arrest of the leaders of the civil war against the revolution (see p. 351) p. 353

[136] The reference is to the decree "On the Opening of the Constituent Assembly", adopted by the Council of People's Commissars on November 26 (December 9) 1917, and published in *Izvestia* No. 237 on November 27. The decree was issued in view of the fact that several Right-wing newspapers had carried the decision

of a group of former ministers who continued to style themselves as members of the Provisional Government, on the opening of the Constituent Assembly at the Taurida Palace at 2.00 p.m. on November 28 (December 11). p. 354

[137] The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies was held in Petrograd from November 26 to December 10 (December 9 to 23), 1917. Apart from delegates from various localities invited by the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Peasant Executive Committee, it was attended by all the delegates of the Extraordinary Peasant Congress, a total of 790 with vote, including 305 Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Centre and Right, 350 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, and 91 Bolsheviks. The atmosphere at the Congress was extremely tense. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to push the Congress their way, and to drive a wedge between the Bolsheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were sitting on the fence. There was an especially stiff fight over the attitude to the Constituent Assembly and the government's decree declaring the Cadets enemies of the people.

Lenin spoke on these issues on December 2 (15). At first a considerable majority supported the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, whose resolution demanded the transfer of power to the Constituent Assembly and censure of the government's acts in ordering the arrest of several Cadets. The Bolshevik group insisted on a revote, and the Congress passed the resolution of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Contradictions on the issue split the Congress and the Right-wingers walked out. The Left-wing majority remained and continued their work. They confirmed the decisions of the Extraordinary All-Russia Peasants' Congress and adhered to the decisions of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The Congress elected a new Executive Committee of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, which it authorised to join the All-Russia Central Executive Committee in implementing the basic demands of the peasants for land and peace. p. 357

[138] *Ukrainian Central Rada*—a counter-revolutionary bourgeois-nationalist organisation set up at the All-Ukraine National Congress in Kiev in April 1917 by a bloc of Ukrainian bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties and groups. The ideologist of the Ukrainian bourgeoisie, M. S. Grushevksy, was its chairman, and V. K. Vinnichenko, his deputy. The Rada had a social base of urban and rural bourgeoisie, and petty-bourgeois nationalist-minded intellectuals. It tried to build up the power of the Ukrainian bourgeoisie and landowners and set up a Ukrainian bourgeois state with the aid of the national liberation movement in the Ukraine. It waved the banner of national independence in an effort to lead the Ukrainian masses away from the all-Russia revolutionary movement, subordinate them to the Ukrainian bourgeoisie and prevent the socialist revolution from winning out in the Ukraine. It supported the Provisional Government in spite of contradictions over the issue of Ukrainian autonomy.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Rada proclaimed itself the supreme organ of the Ukrainian People's Republic and launched an open struggle against Soviet power. It was one of the centres of the counter-revolution.

The First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets, held in Kharkov in December 1917, proclaimed the Ukraine a Soviet republic. The Congress declared the Central Rada overthrown. The Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. recognised the Ukrainian Soviet Government as the sole legitimate government of the Ukraine and decided to give it immediate help in fighting the counter-revolutionary Rada. Armed uprisings against the Central Rada for the re-establishment of Soviet power took place all over the country in December 1917 and January 1918. In January 1918, Soviet troops in the Ukraine launched an offensive and on January 26 (February 8) occupied Kiev. The bourgeois Rada was overthrown.

Defeated and ousted from the territory of the Soviet Ukraine, deprived of any support among the working people, the Central Rada joined the German imperialists in an alliance to overthrow Soviet power and restore the rule of the bourgeoisie in the Ukraine. It sent a delegation to Brest-Litovsk and secretly concluded a separate peace giving Germany the Ukraine's corn, coal, raw materials in return for military aid in the fight against Soviet power. In March 1918, the Rada returned to Kiev as the puppet of the Austro-German invaders who dispersed it in late April when they realised that it was absolutely incapable of suppressing the revolutionary movement in the Ukraine and delivering the goods. p. 361

[139] The rest of the text was written by L. D. Trotsky and edited by Lenin and Stalin. p. 362

[140] Written on December 6-7 (19-20), 1917. After the members of the presidium of the Congress had seen the Manifesto it was read out on their behalf at the evening sitting of December 8 (21). At the insistence of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries the wording was toned down and in that form adopted by the Congress. On behalf of the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies the Manifesto was published in the newspaper *Golos Trudovogo Krestyanstva* (Voice of the Labouring Peasantry) No. 22 of December 15 (28) under the title, "To the Labouring Peasants". p. 368

[141] See Note 137. p. 371

[142] Lenin raised the question of fighting the internal counter-revolution and sabotage before the Council of People's Commissars on December 6 (19), 1917, in view of the fierce resistance to the measures of the Soviet Government and a possible strike by senior civil servants. Dzerzhinsky was asked to form a commission to inquire into ways of fighting the sabotage. On December 7 (20),

the government heard his report, in connection with which Lenin appears to have written his draft decree. At the same sitting the government formed the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission (Cheka) to Combat Counter-Revolution and Sabotage. Dzerzhinsky was appointed its chairman. p. 374

[143] On December 11 (24), 1917, the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) discussed one question—the stand taken by the Bolshevik group in the Constituent Assembly. It was raised in view of the fact that "Right-wing sentiments have prevailed in the group, whose views differ from those of the Central Committee" (*Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.*(*B.*), *August, 1917 to February 1918*, (in Russian, Moscow, 1958, p. 160).

The provisional bureau of the group opposed the C.C. line on the Constituent Assembly. It took a bourgeois-democratic approach to the Assembly and held that its convocation was the final stage of the revolution. It proposed that control over its convocation should be abandoned. The Central Committee resolved to work out theses on the Constituent Assembly and set a meeting of members of the group in Smolny at 4.00 p.m. on December 12 (25) to discuss a C.C. report and theses and to re-elect the bureau of the group. Lenin read out his "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" (see pp. 379-83), which he had written at the Central Committee's request. After a prolonged debate, they were unanimously adopted by the group. On December 13 (26) they were published in *Pravda*. p. 377

[144] *The Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Railwaymen* was held in Petrograd from December 12 (25) to December 30, 1917 (January 12, 1918). It was called on the initiative of the railwaymen's trade unions of the Moscow and Petrograd junctures, and was attended by nearly 300 delegates, of whom more than half were Bolsheviks. On the second day of the Congress Lenin delivered a speech of greetings and was elected honorary chairman. The Congress heard reports on the current situation, a speech by a representative of the Vikzhel, and reports on the food situation, trade-union organisation and the establishment of a network of local Soviets of Railwaymen's Deputies. The overwhelming majority of the Congress supported the views of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The Congress adopted a resolution stating that the Vikzhel's policy was playing into the hands of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, and passed a vote of no confidence in it. The Congress elected 78 delegates for the Railwaymen's Congress set by the Vikzhel for December 19, 1917 (January 1, 1918). p. 384

[145] Written on December 14 (27), 1917, at the request of the Swedish Left-wing Social-Democrat Höglund, who had arrived in Petrograd on an assignment from the Left-wing Social-Democratic Party of Sweden. The article was first published in German in May 1918 in the newspaper *Jugend-Internationale*, the organ of

the International Alliance of Socialist Youth Organisations, which was affiliated with the Zimmerwald Left (published in Zurich from September 1915 to May 1918).

In November 1919, a facsimile of the opening paragraph was used as an illustration to a special edition of *Det röda Ryssland. 1917 11/7 1919*, issued by the Left-wing Socialist publishers *Fram* (Forward) in Stockholm to mark the second anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia. p. 386

[146] Delivered to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on December 14 (27), 1917, in connection with a discussion of the decree nationalising the banks.

Work on practical measures for the nationalisation of the banks was started as soon as the socialist revolution won out. The State Bank was seized on October 25 (November 7), 1917. Having overcome the sabotage of the bourgeois officials, Soviet power soon established practical control of the State Bank and set up control over private banks as a transitional measure to their nationalisation. However, because of sabotage by the bankers, the Soviet Government speeded up the nationalisation of private banks. On the morning of December 14 (27), the Government ordered workers' detachments and Red Guard units to seize all banks and credit institutions in Petrograd. That same day, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee adopted decrees "On the Nationalisation of the Banks" and "On the Inspection of Steel Safes in Banks".

Both decrees were published in *Izvestia* No. 252 on December 15 (28). p. 388

[147] The draft decree was tabled by Lenin for the approval of the Supreme Economic Council in mid-December 1917, and was first published in the magazine *Narodnoye Khozyaistvo* (The National Economy) No. 11 for November 1918. The last paragraph comes from the manuscript and is published here for the first time.

Narodnoye Khozyaistvo—the organ of the Supreme Economic Council; published from March 1918 to December 1922. p. 391

[148] The questions were raised by Lenin on December 17 (30), 1917- at a conference of delegates to the Army Congress on the Demobilisation of the Army whom the Congress had elected to participate in a Commission for the Demobilisation of the Army under the People's Commissariat for the Army. No answers or summaries of answers have been discovered in the archives. It would appear that the answers helped Lenin to arrive at the firm conviction that it would be impossible to continue the war with the Germans, and were taken into account in working out the Party's tactics at the peace talks with Germany. The results of the questionnaire were discussed by the government on December 18 (31) after a report given by N. V. Krylenko on the situation at the front and the morale of the army. The government resolved to

recognise the results of the questionnaire as being exhaustive and adopted a resolution drafted by Lenin (see p. 397).

The manuscript of Lenin's questionnaire has not come down to us; the text published here was given in a letter from a man who was present at the conference, D. S. Vitebsky, to the Lenin Institute in 1924.

The Army Congress on the Demobilisation of the Army was held in Petrograd from December 15 (28), 1917, to January 3 (16), 1918. It was attended by delegates from the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, front-line and corps committees, engineers, artillery units and brigades, staffs, etc. When the Congress opened there were 234 delegates, 119 of them Bolsheviks and 45 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. The Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries appeared to have formed the so-called "extra-factional group". The number of delegates subsequently increased to 272. The task of the Congress was to control the spontaneous demobilisation of the army and to discuss the creation of a new army of the socialist state. The Congress was for all purposes a caretaker organ to guide the army demobilisation and did a great deal of work to that effect.

On December 28, 1917 (January 10, 1918), the Congress discussed the organisation of a socialist army, and the Bolshevik group motioned a project for the formation of a workers' and peasants' army. It was opposed by the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. After some hesitation the Left-wingers supported the Bolsheviks. The project was adopted by 153 to 40 with 13 abstentions.

Lenin was expected to speak at the Congress but was unable to do so because of pressure of work. On January 3 (16), the closing day, he sent a message of greetings to the delegates (see p. 426). p. 395

[149] Adopted by the Council of People's Commissars on December 18 (31), 1917. p. 397

[150] See Marx's letters to Liebknecht of April 8, 1871 and to Kugelmann of April 12, 1871 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, pp. 317-18). p. 401

[151] *Belinsky, Vissarion Grigoryevich* (1811-1848)—outstanding Russian revolutionary democrat, critic, publicist and materialist philosopher. His activity had a great impact on the progress of social thinking and the liberation movement in Russia. p. 408

[152] Marx, Letter to Wilhelm Bracke of May 5, 1875 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 360). p. 413

[153] A quotation from Goethe's *Faust*, Part One, Scene 4—Faust's Study. p. 413

[154] Written December 25-28, 1917 (January 7-10, 1918). Lenin said in his Preliminary Theses that in writing the draft he had made

use of the following documents: directive of the People's Commissariat for Food to the local Soviets of December 22, 1917 (January 4, 1918), on organising the food supply machinery; the Commissariat's project for a Commissariat for Supply, and also the Supreme Economic Council's project for district economic councils. p. 416

[155] The send-off took place in Mikhailovsky Manège on January 1 (14), 1918. As Lenin was returning to the Smolny an attempt was made on his life: a bullet went through the windscreen and passed over his head. The Swiss Communist, Fritz Platten, who was with Lenin, was wounded. p. 420

[156] The draft of the declaration was placed before the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 3 (16), 1918, and adopted as a basis by a majority with two against and one abstention. It was referred to a Co-ordinating Commission for final drafting. The declaration was adopted by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and published in *Izvestia* on January 4 (17). On behalf of the Committee it was read out by Sverdlov at the first sitting of the Constituent Assembly on January 5 (18) and motioned for approval. The counter-revolutionary majority of the Assembly rejected the motion to discuss it. On January 12 (25), it was approved by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets and subsequently formed the basis of the Soviet Constitution.

Paragraph 2 of Lenin's manuscript was altered by Stalin. The paragraph beginning with the words "In essence the Constituent Assembly considers..." was written by Bukharin and edited by Lenin. p. 423

[157] On December 6 (19), 1917, the Finnish Diet adopted a declaration of Finland's independence. In accordance with the nationalities policy of the Soviet state, the Council of People's Commissars, on December 18 (31), 1917, issued a decree on Finland's independence. At the meeting of the Government, Lenin personally handed the text of the decree to Prime Minister Svinhufvud, who led a Finnish Government delegation. On December 22, 1917 (January 4, 1918), the decree on Finland's independence was approved by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

On December 19, 1917 (January 1, 1918), in conformity with a treaty concluded between Russia and Germany, Austro-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria at Brest-Litovsk on December 2 (15), the Soviet Government proposed to the Persian Government to elaborate a common plan for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Persia.

On December 29, 1917 (January 11, 1918), the Government issued the Decree on Turkish Armenia, which was published in *Pravda* No. 227 on December 31, 1917 (January 13, 1918). p. 424

[158] When the counter-revolutionary majority of the Constituent Assembly refused to discuss the "Declaration of Rights of the

Working and Exploited People", the Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary groups demanded an adjournment to allow the groups to confer. Lenin made a short speech at the meeting of the Bolshevik group (no record of it remains). He proposed that his declaration of the Bolshevik group should be read out in the Assembly, after which the Bolsheviks would walk out. His proposal was adopted by the group.

When the Bolsheviks left, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, whose attitude to the Constituent Assembly was uncertain, motioned an immediate vote on the attitude to the policy of peace conducted by Soviet power. When this proposal was rejected by the Right wing, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries walked out as well.

Shortly after, P. E. Dybenko, People's Commissar for the Navy; who was in charge of security in the Taurida Palace, ordered the guard to close the sitting of the Constituent Assembly. When Lenin heard of this, he issued the following instructions: "The comrades soldiers and sailors on guard duty in the Taurida Palace must refrain from any acts of violence in respect of the counter-revolutionary section of the Constituent Assembly, freely allowing everyone to leave the Taurida Palace, but allowing no one in without a special pass. Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, V. Ulyanov (Lenin)." (*Lenin Miscellany XVIII*, p. 46. Published in Russian.)

The Constituent Assembly adjourned at 4.40 a.m. on January 6 (19), 1918. p. 429

[159] *Louis Blanc* (1811-1882)—French petty-bourgeois socialist and historian, who denied that class contradictions under capitalism were antagonistic, opposed the proletarian revolution, and wanted a compromise with the bourgeoisie. Lenin uses the epithet to denote the opportunist and conciliatory tactics of the Mensheviks and other traitors to the cause of the revolution and the interests of the working class. p. 431

[160] The question of dissolving the Constituent Assembly was discussed by the Soviet Government on January 6 (19), 1918. The main content of the decree dissolving it was set out by Lenin in the form of theses.

The All-Russia Central Executive Committee met on the night of January 6 (19) and by a majority against two, with five abstentions, adopted the decree. Lenin spoke on the dissolution of the Assembly (see pp. 437-41). The decree was based on Lenin's draft and was published in *Pravda* and *Izvestia* on January 7 (20), 1918. p. 434

[161] A discussion of the question of war and peace was held by the Central Committee on January 11 (24), 1918, following a speech by Lenin, who was opposed by the Left Communists and Trotsky. Some of them—Bukharin, Uritsky, Lomov (Oppokov)—supported Trotsky's proposal for a "neither war nor peace" attitude. Stalin,

Sergeyev (Artyom) and Sokolnikov favoured peace. The Left Communists did not expect the "revolutionary war now" slogan to go through (only two voted for it), and so voted for Trotsky's proposal, which received 9 votes to 7 against. In the hope of overcoming the resistance to the conclusion of peace within the Central Committee and winning over the section of the masses which followed the advocates of a revolutionary war, Lenin motioned the proposal that the talks should be delayed in every possible way, and this was passed by 12 votes to one. p. 442

[162] The Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies was held in Petrograd from January 10 to 18 (23 to 31), 1918. It was attended by delegates from 317 Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies and 110 army, corps and divisional committees. At the opening were 707 delegates, 441 of them Bolsheviks. On January 13 (26), it was joined by the delegates to the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. Together with late arrivals there was a total of 1,587 delegates at the final sitting.

The Presidium of the Congress consisted of 10 Bolsheviks, 3 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and 1 delegate from each other group (Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, etc.).

Greetings were conveyed by delegates from the Swiss, Rumanian, Swedish and Norwegian Social-Democratic parties, the British Socialist Party and the labour socialists of America.

The Congress discussed Sverdlov's report on the activity of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Lenin reported to the Congress on the activity of the Council of People's Commissars. In the debates, the Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Menshevik internationalists opposed the domestic and foreign policy of Soviet power. Their attitudes were criticised by Lenin in a summing-up speech. The Congress approved Lenin's "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People", which later became the basis of the Soviet Constitution. A Congress resolution gave full approval to the policy of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars and gave them a vote of confidence.

The Congress also approved the Government's policy on peace and conferred on it the broadest powers in this matter.

The Congress heard a report by Stalin, People's Commissar for Nationalities', on the principles of federation and the policy of Soviet power on the question of nationalities and adopted a resolution constituting the Russian Socialist Republic as a federation of Soviet Republics, on the basis of a free union of the peoples of Russia. The Congress approved the Government's policy on the question of nationalities.

The arrival of the delegates to the Third All-Russia Peasants' Congress was a notable event: the Congress continued its deliberations as a joint Congress of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

The Congress approved the basic provisions of the law on the socialisation of land worked out on the basis of the Decree on Land.

It elected an All-Russia Central Executive Committee consisting of 160 Bolsheviks, 125 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 2 Social-Democrat internationalists, 3 anarchist Communists, 7 Socialist-Revolutionary Maximalists, 7 Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and 2 Mensheviks.

In a summing-up speech, Lenin said that the Congress "has opened a new epoch in world history" and by establishing the organisation of a new state power created by the October Revolution "has projected the lines of future socialist construction for the whole world, for the working people of all countries" (p. 479). p. 453

[163] The reference is to the talks between the All-Russia Leather Workers Union with their employers for wider workers' representation in the Central Leather Committee and its remoulding on democratic lines. The Central Committee and the district committees were reorganised in early 1918 with the workers getting two-thirds of the votes. On April 6, 1918, a telegram signed by Lenin was sent to all Soviets on the need to democratise the local organs of the leather industry, and fulfil precisely the instructions issued by the Central and district committees for the leather industry. p. 470

[164] Marx's letter to Engels of February 12, 1870. p. 471

[165] The reference is to the anti-war general strike by Italian workers in Turin in August 1917, and the strikes staged by Austrian workers in January 1918 in connection with the peace talks in Brest-Litovsk. The strikes in Austria were held under slogans demanding a general peace and improvement of food supplies for the workers. p. 471

[166] The reference is to the Message of the Revolutionary Finnish Government to the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Republic, published in *Pravda* (evening edition) No. 13, on January 17 (30), 1918.

The revolution in Finland broke out in mid-January 1918 in the southern industrial areas. On January 15 (28), the Finnish Red Guard occupied Helsingfors, the capital, and overthrew the reactionary bourgeois government of Svinhufvud. A revolutionary government of Finland, the Council of People's Representatives was set up on January 16 (29). Power in the towns and villages in the south of Finland passed into the hands of the workers. The Svinhufvud government was entrenched in the north and appealed to the German Government for help. Following the intervention of the German armed forces and a bitter civil war, the revolution in Finland was crushed in May 1918. p. 480

[167] The reference is to the Basic Law on the Socialisation of Land tabled for approval at the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The draft was edited by a commission of the Congress in which Lenin took part. On January 18 (31), 1918, the law (Section One—General Provisions) was approved by the Congress. It was further elaborated at joint sittings of the Congress of Land Committees and the peasant section of the Third Congress of Soviets. The final text of the law was approved by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 27 (February 9). p. 481

[168] *Extraordinary All-Russia Railwaymen's Congress* was held in Petrograd from January 5 to 30 (January 18 to February 12), 1918. The Left wing of the Second Extraordinary Railwaymen's Congress called by the Vikzhel on December 19, 1917 (January 1, 1918), walked out and held a separate congress when the Right wing (Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, etc.) adopted a resolution by a majority of 12 to the effect that all power in the country must belong to the Constituent Assembly.

The resolution adopted by the Extraordinary All-Russia Railwaymen's Congress said that it was solidly behind Soviet power. It worked out new wage rates for railway workers and officials adopted railway regulations and rules for the people's railway militia, heard a report on the nationalisation of private railways, etc. It elected a new All-Russia Railwaymen's Executive Committee (Vikzhedor). p. 484

[169] Kaledin's order for the arrest of the Congress of Front-line Cossacks in Kamenskaya Village came too late, for the Revolutionary Military Committee set up at the Congress had taken power in Kamenskaya. This was reported to the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets by a delegate who had taken part in the events in Kamenskaya. p. 488

[170] The reference is to the decree issued by the People's Commissar for Communications M. T. Yelizarov on January 2 (15), 1918, on wage rates for railwaymen, which set an almost similar rate for the labour of skilled workers, engineers and unskilled workers. The Council of People's Commissars rescinded his decree on January 7 (20), and, pending the Extraordinary All-Russia Railwaymen's Congress, ordered payments to be made at rates established by a decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on December 2 (15), 1917, which were based on grades and zones. p. 499

[171] The meeting of the Presidium of the Petrograd Soviet with delegates from food supply organisations discussed the grave food situation of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd who received only a quarter of a pound of bread a day. It heard a report by a representative of the food board on the prospects of better food supplies for Petrograd and a report of the unloading commission. A decision of the Council of People's Commissars on January 19

(February 1) increased the food ration to one-half pound for the whole population of Petrograd. p. 501

[172] The question of the nationalisation of the merchant marine and inland water transport was discussed at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on January 18 (31), 1918. It heard three reports: one from Tsentrovolga, another from the Central Committee of the All-Russia Seamen's and River Transport Workers' Union, and a third from the Supreme Economic Council. Lenin's draft was approved as a decision of the Council of People's Commissars "On Seamen and River Transport Workers". p. 505

[173] The reference is to the Central Committee of the All-Russia Seamen's and River Transport Workers' Union. p. 505

[174] The reference is to a demand made by a group of Left Communists—Bukharin, Lomov (Oppokov), Osinsky (Obolensky) and others—on January 15 (28), 1918, to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) for a Party conference to discuss and decide on the question of peace. p. 507

[175] Lenin's proposal for a congress was adopted. It was first set by the C.C. meeting of January 19 (February 1), 1918, for February 20, but was later postponed until March 6, 1918. p. 507

[176] Lenin's proposal for a conference of various groups on peace was adopted. It was held on January 21 (February 3), 1918, but no minutes are available. There is only a record of the vote on 10 questions connected with the conclusion of peace (see *Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), August 1917-February 1918*, in Russian, 1958, pp. 190-91). On the main question—Is it permissible to sign a German annexationist peace now?—five participants said yes. They were Lenin, Stalin, Muranov, Artyom (Sergeyev) and Sokolnikov; 9 voted against. They were Lomov (Oppokov), Krestinsky, Bubnov, Kosior, Osinsky (Obolensky), Stukov, Preobrazhensky, Spunde and Fenigstein. Zinoviev, Bukharin and Uritsky left the conference before the vote. p. 509

[177] The reference is to a break in telegraph communications between Moscow and Brest-Litovsk due to German tampering. p. 510

[178] The reference is to the fact cited in a report to the Third Congress of Soviets on January 16 (29), 1918, by a participant in the Cossack Congress in Kamenskaya. p. 516

[179] The telegram is in reply to Trotsky's query on the German ultimatum at Brest-Litovsk on January 15 (28), 1918.

Apart from Lenin's signature there is also that of Stalin. The words "Reply, January 28, 6.30 p.m. ... Keep us informed" were written by Stalin. p. 517

[180] Lenin delivered his speech at the closing sitting of the Land: Committee Congress and the peasant section of the Third Congress of Soviets.

The Land Committee Congress opened in Petrograd on January 17 (30), 1918. Its first sitting was attended by 472 delegates from 43 gubernias and 243 uyezds. The Congress subsequently worked together with the peasant section of the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets which ended on January 18 (31). It was then attended by more than 1,000 delegates. The various sections of the Congress worked out the details of the Basic Law on the Socialisation of Land (see Note 167). p. 518

[181] The morning sitting of the Central Committee on February 18, 1918, discussed the German offensive and the dispatch of a telegram to the German Government announcing readiness to conclude a peace.

The pretext for the German offensive was Trotsky's refusal to sign a peace treaty in Brest-Litovsk. At 7.30 p.m. on February 16, 1918, the German Command officially informed the Soviet representatives at Brest-Litovsk that the ceasefire between Russia and Germany would be terminated at noon on February 18 and a state of war resumed. Under the Brest-Litovsk armistice agreement, concluded on December 2 (15), 1917, the parties were bound to give a seven-day notice of their intention to abrogate the agreement. The German Command violated this commitment. The Soviet Government sent a protest to the German Government over the breach of the armistice agreement, but received no reply. On the morning of February 18 reports were received that German troops had gone into action.

At the Central Committee meeting, Lenin's proposal that a telegram should be sent to the German Government immediately was opposed by Trotsky and Bukharin; Zinoviev favoured its dispatch. When put to the vote Lenin's proposal got 6 votes with 7 against. It was decided to call the next meeting at 2.00 p.m. the next day, but in view of the unfurling German offensive it was called on the night of February 18. p. 520

[182] The reference is to the Central Committee meeting on the evening of February 17 which discussed the question of a possible German offensive. Five members of the Central Committee (Lenin, Stalin Sverdlov, Sokolnikov and Smilga) voted for Lenin's proposal that the talks with Germany should be renewed immediately; 6 voted against (Trotsky, Bukharin, Lomov, Uritsky, Ioffe and Krestinsky). However, when the question was formulated as follows: "If the German offensive becomes a fact, without there being any revolutionary upsurge in Germany and Austria, do we conclude a peace?" Trotsky voted in the affirmative. Bukharin,

Lomov, Uritsky and Krestinsky abstained, and only Ioffe voted against. Thus the proposal was adopted by a majority. p. 520

[183] The evening sitting of the Central Committee on February 18, 1918, was held in a highly tense atmosphere. It was called in view of the fact that the Germans had launched an offensive that day and had taken Dvinsk in their headlong advance. The Left Communists once again opposed Lenin's proposals, but Trotsky proposed that inquiries should be sent to Berlin and Vienna about the German Government's demands, without informing it of the consent to conclude a peace. Sverdlov, Stalin and Zinoviev favoured the dispatch of a telegram to the German Government informing it of readiness to resume the talks. It was at this sitting that Lenin first succeeded, after a bitter struggle, to secure a majority in favour of concluding a peace: his proposal for an immediate message to the German Government offering to conclude peace was adopted by 7 votes to 6. p. 522

[184] The wireless message to the Government of the German Reich was sent to Berlin on the morning of February 19 on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars. But the German Government's reply, containing even harsher peace terms, was handed to the Soviet courier only on February 22 and was received in Petrograd on the morning of February 23; it demanded that the new peace terms should be studied within 48 hours. The Germans, while delaying their own reply, continued their offensive, and in those few days covered a great deal of territory; they occupied a number of towns and came within striking distance of Petrograd. p. 525

THE LIFE AND WORK OF V. I. LENIN

Outstanding Dates
(*September 1917-February 1918*)

1917

Prior to September 17 (*30*)	Lenin lives in Helsingfors (Finland). Following the July events he goes underground to escape the Provisional Government's agents and directs the Party through his followers and associates in Petrograd.
September 15 (*28*)	The Central Committee discusses Lenin's letters "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power" and "Marxism and Insurrection", which it circulated among the major Bolshevik organisations.
September 17 (*30*)	Lenin moves from Helsingfors to Vyborg to establish closer ties with the Party's Central Committee.
Not later than September 22 (*October 5*)	Lenin writes the article "Heroes of Fraud and the Mistakes of the Bolsheviks". Under the title "Heroes of Fraud" an abridged version of the article appeared in *Rabochy Put* No. 19 on September 24 (October 7).
September 22-2 (*October 5-7*)	Lenin writes the article "From a Publicist's Diary. The Mistakes of Our Party".
September 27 (*October 10*)	Lenin writes a letter to the Chairman of the Regional Committee of the Army, Navy and Workers of Finland, I. T. Smilga.
September 29 (*October 12*)	Lenin writes the article "The Crisis Has Matured".
End of September-October 1 (*14*)	Lenin writes the article "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?"

Between September 29 and October 4 (*October 12 and 17*) — Lenin writes his "Theses for a Report at the October 8 Conference of the Petrograd Organisation, also for a Resolution and Instructions to Those Elected to the Party Congress".

Between September 30 and October 12 (*October 13 and 25*) — Lenin signs two applications stating his consent to stand for the Constituent Assembly as a nominee of the Northern Front of the army in the field and the Baltic Fleet.

October 1 (*14*) — Lenin writes the "Letter to the Central Committee, the Moscow and Petrograd Committees and the Bolshevik Members of the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets", proposing that power should be taken without delay.

October 1-2 (*14-15*) — Lenin writes his message "To Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers!", calling on them to overthrow the Kerensky government and hand power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

October 3 (*16*) — The Central Committee adopts a decision to invite Lenin to Petrograd.

October 5 (*18*) — The Central Committee elects a commission headed by Lenin to draft the Party's programme.

October 6-8 (*19-21*) — Lenin writes the article "Revision of the Party Programme".

October 7 (*20*) — Lenin returns from Vyborg to Petrograd illegally and settles in M. V. Fofanova's flat in Vyborg District. That same day he writes his "Letter to the Petrograd City Conference. To be Read in Closed Session".

October 8 (*21*) — Lenin writes the article "Advice of an Onlooker" and "Letter to the Bolshevik Comrades Attending the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, saying that the Bolsheviks should take power and giving a concrete plan for the uprising.

October 10 (*23*) — Lenin reports to the Central Committee on the current situation; he tables a resolution calling for an armed uprising, which is adopted.

The Central Committee also sets up a Political

Bureau headed by Lenin to provide political guidance during the insurrection.

Between October 10 and 16 (*23 and 29*) — In M. I. Kalinin's flat, Lenin meets members of the Central Committee and discusses preparations for the armed uprising.

Between October 12 and 15 (*25 and 28*) — Lenin has several secret meetings with O. A. Pyatnitsky, a representative of the Moscow Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), and discusses with him preparations in Moscow for the armed uprising-signs statement agreeing to stand in the election to the Constituent Assembly as the candidate for Moscow.

October 14 (*27*) — At the flat of G. E. Jalava, an engine driver of the Finland Railway, Lenin meets leading Bolsheviks to discuss preparations for the armed uprising.

October 16 (*29*) — Lenin reports to an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee on the C.C. meeting of October 10 (23) and reads out its resolution on the armed uprising.

October 17 (*30*) — Lenin writes his "Letter to Comrades" exposing Kamenev and Zinoviev's treacherous behaviour in opposing the armed uprising.

October 18 (*31*) — Lenin writes his "Letter to Bolshevik Party Members" demanding the expulsion of Zinoviev and Kamenev from the Party as "strike-breakers" who had divulged the secret Central Committee decision on the armed uprising.

October 19 (*November 1*) — Lenin writes his "Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.)" demanding the expulsion of Zinoviev and Kamenev from the Party as "strike-breakers" who had divulged the secret Central Committee decision on the armed uprising.

October 20 (*November 2*) — Lenin writes the article "Socialist-Revolutionary Party Cheats the Peasants Once Again".

The Central Committee discusses Lenin's "Letter to Bolshevik Party Members" and the "Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.)".

October 24 (*November 6*) — Lenin writes the "Letter to Central Committee Members" demanding an immediate armed uprising.

Night of October 24 (November 6)

Lenin secretly arrives in the Smolny and takes over the general practical direction of the armed uprising of the Petrograd workers, soldiers and sailors.

Lenin takes part in the Central Committee meeting which discusses the formation of the Soviet Government.

October 25 (November 7)

At 10 a.m., Lenin, on behalf of the Revolutionary Military Committee, writes the appeal "To the Citizens of Russia!", announcing the overthrow of the Provisional Government and the transfer of power into the hands of the Revolutionary Military Committee.

Lenin attends the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, drafts its resolution and reports on the tasks of Soviet power.

Lenin writes the appeal of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to Workers, Soldiers and Peasants.

Lenin writes the draft decrees on peace, on land, and the formation of the Soviet Government.

October 26 (November 8)

Lenin takes part in the proceedings of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and gives reports on peace and on land. The Congress adopts Lenin's Decree on Peace, Decree on Land, and the resolution forming the Workers' and Peasants' Government; it approves the composition of the Council of People's Commissars headed by Lenin. Lenin is elected member of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (Second Convocation).

October 26 or 27 (November 8 or 9)

Lenin writes the "Draft Regulations on Workers' Control".

Lenin attends the meeting of the Central Council of the Petrograd Factory Committees to discuss the introduction of workers' control of production and the establishment of a governing economic organ.

October 27 (November 9)

Lenin attends the first sitting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (Second Convocation).

Night of October 27 November 9)

The Central Committee of the Party and the Council of People's Commissars set up a commission headed by Lenin to organise and direct the fight against the Kerensky-Krasnov counter-revolutionary revolt.

Lenin arrives at the headquarters of the Petrograd Military District, and hears the reports of N. I. Podvoisky, V. A. Antonov-Ovseyenko and K. A. Mekhanoshin on the situation obtaining after the seizure of Gatchina by General Krasnov's Cossack units, and the plans for fighting them. On Lenin's proposal, a decision is taken to use the ships of the Baltic Fleet in the operations against Krasnov's troops.

Lenin telegraphs an order to Helsingfors on the immediate dispatch to Petrograd of detachments of sailors and warships of the Baltic Fleet and army units to fight the Krasnov-Kerensky troops.

Lenin informs the members of the Executive Commission of the Petersburg Party Committee of the Krasnov offensive against Petrograd and proposes that the digging of trenches and throwing up of barbed-wire entanglements should be started right away at the approaches to the city.

October 28 (*November 10*)

Lenin directs the operations to defeat the Krasnov-Kerensky counter-revolutionary revolt, and takes part in working out plans for operations against them.

Lenin holds a conference of delegates from Party organisations, factory committees, trade unions, district Soviets, and units of the Petrograd garrison on the defence of Petrograd.

Lenin asks the Putilov workers to supply the front with several batteries and an armoured train.

Night of October 28 (*November 10*)

Lenin arrives at the Putilov Works, talks with workers and asks them to speed up the construction of the armoured train and assembly of guns.

October 29 (*November 11*)

In connection with the counter-revolutionary putsch launched by officer cadets in Petrograd on the night of October 29, Lenin confers with members of the Revolutionary Military Committee.

Lenin talks with member of the Moscow Revolu-

tionary Military Committee, M. P. Tomsky, on the course of the putsch in Moscow.

Lenin explains to agitators, who met at his request that there is need to call on the regiments of the Petrograd garrison to fight against the Krasnov-Kerensky counter-revolutionary troops.

Lenin reports to a conference of regimental delegates of the Petrograd garrison on the current situation and speaks on the arming of units and law and order in the city.

October 29 (*November 12*) Lenin attends a meeting of the Bolshevik group of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to discuss the proposal of the All-Russia Executive Committee of the Railwaymen's Trade Union (Vikzhel) on the formation of a "uniform socialist government" with the participation of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and exposes Kamenev and other capitulants who supported the proposal.

October 30 (*November 12*) Lenin writes and broadcasts the government's announcement that power has passed to the Soviets, and that the Soviet Government is taking measures to suppress counter-revolutionary risings.

End of October Lenin writes the "Draft Rules for Office Employees".

November 1 (*13*) Lenin addresses an enlarged meeting of the Party's Central Committee on the treasonable behaviour of Kamenev and Ryazanov at the Vikzhel conferences.

November 2 (*15*) Lenin signs the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, proclaiming complete equality for the country's nationalities.

Lenin attends a sitting of the Party's Central Committee to discuss the defeatist behaviour of Kamenev, Zinoviev and others. The Central Committee adopts Lenin's resolution on the opposition within the Central Committee.

November 3 (*16*) Lenin writes the "Ultimatum from the Majority on the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) to the Minority".

Lenin presides at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars to discuss Nogin's report on the situation in Moscow and objects to any agreement with the Vikzhel.

November 4 (*17*) Lenin attends a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, speaks on the question of the press and on the resignation of Nogin, Rykov, Milyutin and Teodorovich and replies to the questions of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Lenin speaks at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet and front-line delegates on the programme and tasks of the Soviet Government.

November 5 (*18*) Lenin writes a message "To the Population" and "Reply to Questions from Peasants"; instructs the government's secretary to hand typewritten copies of his "Reply" bearing his signature to peasant messengers arriving at the Smolny.

November 5-6 (*18-19*) Lenin writes an appeal "From the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks). To All Party Members and to All the Working Classes of Russia", branding Kamenev, Zinoviev, Nogin, Rykov and Milyutin as deserters and traitors for having left the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars.

November 7 (*20*) On behalf of the government Lenin orders the Commander-in-Chief, Dukhonin, to make an offer of an immediate ceasefire to all the belligerent countries.

Night of November 8 (*21*) Lenin has a direct-line conversation with General Dukhonin from the headquarters of the Petrograd Military District.

Lenin arrives at the "Novaya Gollandia" radio station and writes his "Wireless Message. To All Regimental, Divisional, Corps, Army and Other Committees, to All Soldiers of the Revolutionary Army and Sailors of the Revolutionary Navy".

November 9 (*22*) Lenin speaks at an enlarged meeting of the Petrograd Trade Union Council on the nature of the October Revolution and the tasks of Soviet power.

November 10 (*23*)

Lenin reports to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on the talks with Dukhonin.

Lenin approves and signs the decree abolishing social estates and civil ranks.

November 12 (*25*)

The government instruction to the Revolutionary Military Committee on strict measures to eradicate speculation and sabotage, written by Lenin, appears in *Izvestia* No. 223.

November 1 (*27*)

Lenin speaks before the Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies on the agrarian question and reads out his draft resolution on the attitude of the Congress to the Decree on Land.

November 15 (*28*)

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the establishment of an Economic Council.

November 16 (*29*)

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss a draft decree on revolutionary courts and the abolition of all the old judicial institutions; transfer of Ukrainian national relics to the Ukrainian people, talks with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries on their participation in the government, etc.

November 18 (*December 1*)

Lenin delivers a summing-up speech on the agrarian question at the Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the questions of a Supreme Economic Conference; nationalisation of factories in the Donets area; and salaries for People's Commissars. Lenin's draft resolution is adopted.

November 19 (*December 2*)

Lenin writes the draft decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on the right of electors to recall deputies, and the right of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants Deputies to appoint re-elections to all representative institutions, including the Constituent Assembly.

Lenin presides at a meeting of the government, writes a draft resolution on a report on a war ministry. Other items discussed at the meeting include the situation in the Ukraine and the question of the Central Rada; the query of the Moscow Soviet about the right of Soviets to se-

quester factories and plants; questions of trade and financial relations with Finland, a purge of the ministries, etc.

November 21 (*December 4*) Lenin reports to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on the right of recalling deputies to the Constituent Assembly, and tables a draft decree which is adopted.

November 22 (*December 5*) Lenin speaks on the current situation at the First All-Russia Congress of the Navy.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the question of revolutionary courts.

November 25 (*December 8*) Lenin sends a letter to the Factory Committee of the Tula Arms Factory requesting rifles, pistols and other arms for the Red Guard of the Bokovsky Mountain District, Don Region.

Lenin reports to the government on his talk with a delegation of the Union of Cossack Troops.

November 26 (*December 9*) Lenin writes a letter to the headquarters of the Petrograd Military District urging the extension of urgent military aid to Orenburg against the whiteguard Cossack Chief, Dutov.

November 27 (*December 10*) Lenin writes the foreword to *Material on the Agrarian Question*.

Lenin presides at a government meeting; motions a proposal to set up a special commission to implement a socialist policy in financial and economic affairs. The meeting also discusses the composition of a peace delegation for talks with Germany, instructions to the delegation, etc.

Lenin writes the general political part of the "Outline Programme for Peace Negotiations".

November 28 (*December 11*) Lenin writes to the All-Russia Commission for elections to the Constituent Assembly requesting it to consider him elected to the Assembly from the Baltic Fleet.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the Cadet Party's counter-revolutionary plot; he tables his draft decree on the arrest of the leaders of the civil war against the revolution.

November 29 (*December 12*) Lenin speaks at a Central Committee meeting on the composition of Pravda's editorial board- is elected to the Central Committee Bureau set up to handle urgent matters.

Lenin writes and tables for the government's approval a decision transferring all war plants to productive economic operation.

December 1 (*14*) Lenin speaks at the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on the establishment of a Supreme Economic Council and on the Constituent Assembly.

Lenin reports to the Bolshevik group of the Constituent Assembly on the Party's tactics in respect of the Assembly.

December 2 (*15*) Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss instructions to the Commander-in-Chief Krylenko on the Ukrainian question, on the Byelorussian Rada and financial support for the Byelorussian Regional Committee, etc.

On behalf of the Bolshevik group, Lenin addresses the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

December 3 (*16*) Lenin writes the "Main Points of a Manifesto to the Ukrainian People" and the "Manifesto to the Ukrainian People with an Ultimatum to the Ukrainian Rada". The Manifesto is unanimously adopted by the Council of People's Commissars.

December 4 (*17*) Lenin reports to a meeting of the workers' section of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on the economic condition of the Petrograd workers and the tasks facing the working class.

December 5 (*18*) Lenin presides at a government meeting, takes part in a commission to organise military operations against the Central Rada and addresses an appeal, on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars, to the Ukrainian people and soldiers Lenin is also elected to a commission to examine draft regulations and instructions for volost committees.

December 6 (*19*) Lenin issues instructions to railway commissars to give the green light to the troops train of the

First Caucasian Regiment of the Fifth Caucasian Cossack Division on its way to fight the whiteguard General Kaledin.

December 7 (20) Lenin writes a note to Felix Dzerzhinsky on the fight against saboteurs and counter-revolutionaries.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss Dzerzhinsky's report on the establishment and composition of the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution and Sabotage (Cheka).

December 11 (24) Lenin takes part in the proceedings of the plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee.

December 11 or 12 (24 or 25) Lenin writes the "Draft Resolution on the Provisional Bureau of the Bolshevik Group in the Constituent Assembly", and draws up his "Theses on the Constituent Assembly".

December 12 (25) Lenin's "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" are unanimously adopted by the Bolshevik group of the Constituent Assembly.

December 13 (26) Lenin delivers a speech of greetings on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars at the Extraordinary Congress of Railwaymen.

December 14 (27) Lenin hears reports from the chiefs of operations to seize private banks.

Lenin writes the article "For Bread and Peace".

Lenin attends a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and speaks in the debate on the report on the nationalisation of the banks.

Not earlier than December 14 (27) Lenin writes his notes on the Soviet Government's economic policy.

Lenin works out the "Draft Decree on the Nationalisation of the Banks and on Measures Necessary for Its Implementation".

Lenin attends a meeting of the Bureau of the Supreme Economic Council; tables his "Draft Decree on the Nationalisation of the Banks and

on Measures Necessary for Its Implementation", delivers a report to substantiate his project and answers questions.

December 15 (*28*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the establishment of a commission of practical workers under the Supreme Economic Council the government adopts Lenin's draft decision on the question.

December 16 (*29*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss transitional forms for the army in the period of demobilisation, and the formation of non-Russian units in the army, etc.

December 17 (*30*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss a report of the Soviet peace delegation to Brest-Litovsk, etc.

Lenin attends a conference of delegates to the Army Congress on the Demobilisation of the Army called on his proposal, writes "Questions to Delegates to the Army Congress on the Demobilisation of the Army", reads them out, and asks the conference and Congress delegates to answer the questions in writing.

December 18 (*31*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the situation at the front and the morale of the army; Lenin's resolution is adopted.

Lenin sees a Finnish Government delegation and hands it the government's decree recognising Finland as an independent state.

December 19 (*January 1*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting; tables his draft decisions on starting talks with the Central Rada and on the action of I. Z. Steinberg, People's Commissar for Justice, in releasing without sanction members of the Alliance in Defence of the Constituent Assembly arrested by the Cheka.

Night of December 20 (*January 2, 1918*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss preparations for the Constituent Assembly, etc.

December 23 (*January 5, 1918*) — Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the draft decree on Turkish Armenia, etc.

The government decides to send Lenin on a short holiday.

December 2 (January 6, 1918) Lenin takes a holiday in Finland.

December 24-27 (January 6-9, 1918) While on holiday, Lenin writes the articles "From a Publicist's Diary (Topics for Elaboration)" "Fear of the Collapse of the Old and the Fight for the New"; "How to Organise Competition?"; "Draft Decree on Consumers' Communes".

1918

January 1 (14) Lenin speaks at the Mikhailovsky Manège at the send-off of the first troop trains of the socialist army. Lenin is unhurt when his car is shot at by counter-revolutionary terrorists as he is leaving.

Lenin reports to the government on the events of the day.

Not later than January 3 (16) Lenin writes the "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People".

January 3 (16) Lenin writes a letter to the Army Congress on the Demobilisation of the Army.

Lenin telegraphs instructions to the Russian delegation at Brest-Litovsk to arrange an adjournment of the peace conference and to return to Petrograd.

January 5 (18) Lenin attends a sitting of the Constituent Assembly; during a recess he attends a meeting of the Central Committee to discuss tactics in respect of the Constituent Assembly; writes a draft declaration by the Bolsheviks on their withdrawal from the Assembly; talks with Bolshevik deputies; and speaks at a meeting of the Bolshevik group to substantiate the Central Committee's proposal for a Bolshevik walk-out from the Assembly and their subsequent attitude.

January 6 (19) Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss

his theses on the Constituent Assembly, all of which are adopted.

Lenin writes the "Draft Decree on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly".

Lenin speaks before the Committee on the dissolution of the Assembly and tables his draft decree which the Committee approves.

January 7 (*20*) Lenin writes the "Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace".

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss a report on the course of the peace talks at Brest-Litovsk, etc.

January 8 (*21*) Lenin reads his "Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace" at a meeting of Petrograd's leading Party workers.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss food policy and an All-Russia Food Council under the Supreme Economic Council.

January 9 (*22*) Lenin takes part in the proceedings of a plenary meeting of the Central Committee.

January 10 (*23*) Lenin attends the opening of the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and is elected its honorary chairman.

January 11 (*24*) Lenin speaks twice on the question of peace at a meeting of the Bolshevik Party Central Committee.

Lenin reports to the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets on the activity of the Council of People's Commissars.

January 12 (*25*) Lenin's "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People" is adopted by the Third Congress of Soviets.

Lenin delivers the summing-up speech at the Third Congress of Soviets on the report of the Council of People's Commissars.

January 13 (*26*) Lenin reports to the Extraordinary All-Russia

Railwaymen's Congress on the activity of the Council of People's Commissars, and replies to written questions.

January 14 (*27*) Lenin speaks at a conference of the Presidium of the Petrograd Soviet and delegates of food organisations on measures to combat the famine, and tables his draft resolution.

January 15 (*28*) Lenin writes a letter to G. K. Orjonikidze, Commissar Extraordinary for the Ukraine, and Commander-in-Chief Antonov-Ovseyenko in Kharkov, demanding that they should take "the most vigorous and revolutionary measures" to dispatch grain to Petrograd.

Lenin orders the Revolutionary Naval Committee to send 2,000 sailors for military operations against the Central Rada.

Lenin signs a government decree on the organisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

January 16 (*29*) Lenin works out a draft government message to the All-Russia Food Congress proposing that experienced workers should be appointed to the top food supply bodies to take resolute steps to overcome the famine.

Lenin signs a government decree appropriating 20 million rubles to organise the Red Army.

January 18 (*31*) Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the nationalisation of the merchant marine and inland water transport; a resolution drafted by Lenin is adopted.

Lenin writes the "Draft Decree On Expunging References to the Constituent Assembly from Soviet Legislation".

Lenin delivers the summing-up speech at the closing of the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

January 19 (*February 1*) Lenin speaks at a meeting of the Central Committee on the conclusion of peace with Germany and the convocation of a Party Congress.

January 21 (*February 3*) Lenin speaks at an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee and Party workers on the conclusion of peace with Germany.

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

Lenin broadcasts a message to the peace delegation at Brest-Litovsk on the ground gained by Soviet power in the Ukraine, Finland and on the Don.

January 22 (*February 4*) — Lenin broadcasts on the situation at home.

Lenin sends a telegram to Orjonikidze in Kharkov conveying his thanks for the vigorous measures taken to supply food and gives his instructions on further efforts to procure and deliver grain to the centre.

January 23 (*February 5*) — Lenin signs Broadcast No. 4 on the liquidation of the counter-revolutionary Rada, the proclamation of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Ukraine and its People's Secretariat as the supreme power in the Ukraine; establishment of federal relations between Soviet Russia and the Soviet Ukraine; the defeat of the Dutov revolt in the Urals and the triumph of Soviet power in the Crimea.

January 24 (*February 6*) — Lenin speaks at a Central Committee meeting on the agenda of the Seventh Party Congress; he proposes the following items: review of the Party programme, the question of peace, and tactical questions. Lenin is elected to a commission to draft the Party programme.

Lenin's speech to propagandists on their way to the provinces is carried by *Pravda* No. 18.

January 28 (*February 10*) — Lenin delivers a speech at the closing sitting of the Land Committee Congress and t e peasant section of the Third Congress of Soviets.

In reply to a question from the chairman of the Russian delegation to the Brest-Litovsk peace conference, Trotsky, as to the attitude to be taken to the German delegation's ultimatum, Lenin sends a telegram reaffirming his view that a peace treaty should be signed with Germany.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss a revolutionary press tribunal, etc.

February 18 — Lenin speaks at the morning and evening sittings of the Central Committee on the resumption of peace talks with Germany.

February 18 Lenin sends a government telegram to the German Government protesting against the German offensive and announcing readiness to conclude a peace.

February 19 Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss foreign policy and organise national defence in the face of the German offensive.

February 20 Lenin cables his replies to the Moscow Soviet on the government's measures in connection with the German offensive.

Lenin presides at a government meeting to discuss the nationalisation of oilfields and the situation at the front.

Lenin is elected to the Provisional Executive Committee set up to handle current business in between government meetings.

В. И. ЛЕНИН

СОЧИНЕНИЯ

Том 26

На английскот языке